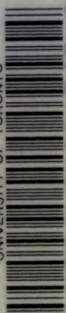


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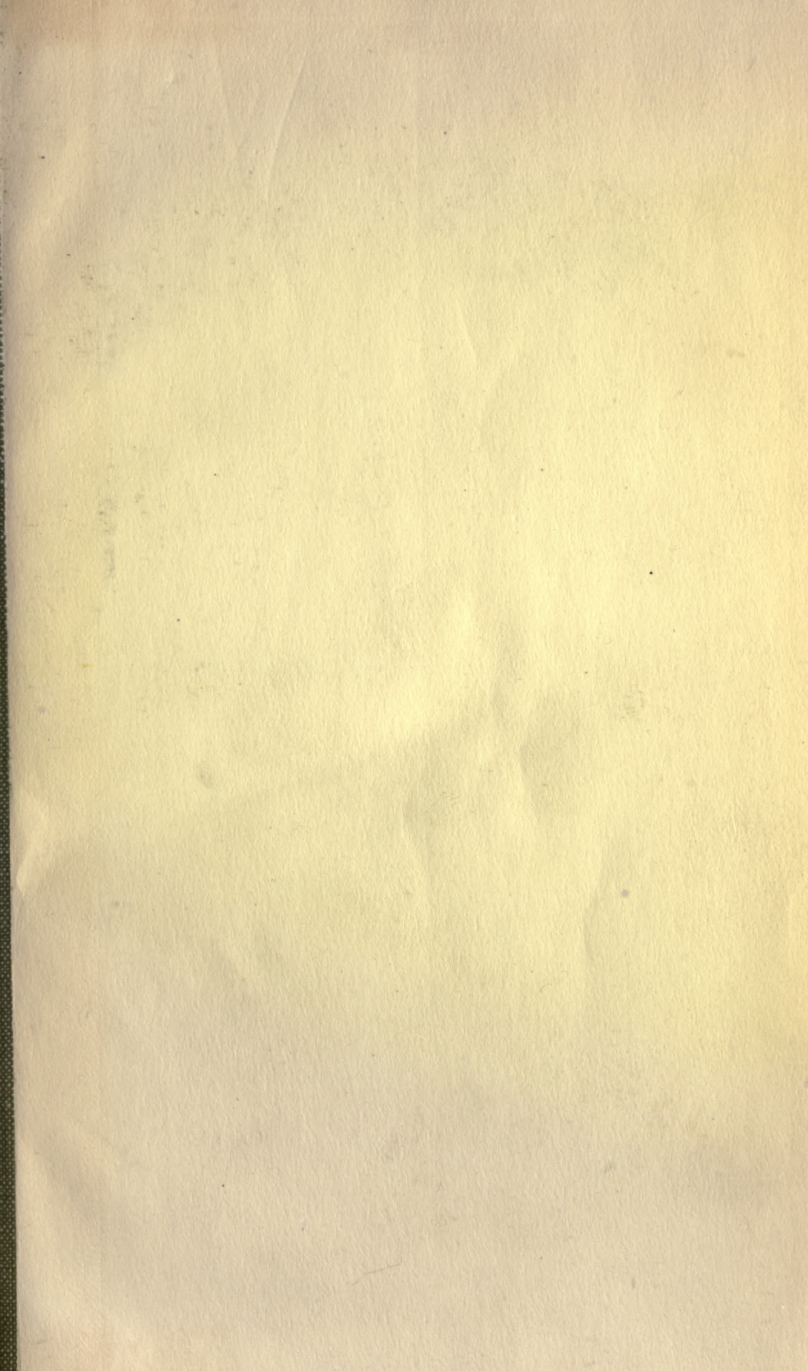


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THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.





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# THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

OR

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS  
OF OUR GRANDFATHERS.

By ALEXANDER ANDREWS.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

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BY ALEXANDER ANDREWS

LONDON:

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# THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

IF it were possible for us to retrace but three steps down the ladder of time, we should alight into a world which we should not recognise as our own—as rich in curiosities as the buried cities of Italy—and of which, in the course of another generation, we shall know as little about the domestic customs as we do about the every-day life of Etruria. So rapidly do the manners of a nation change. Time leads men into different paths from those in which their grandfathers trod; and the period of a century frequently makes the generations which it separates as different people from each other as a rolling ocean or leagues of desert country—different in their tastes—different in their ideas—different in their employments—different in their inclinations, as well as in their dress and customs.

England in the present century no more resembles England in the last, than the native inhabitants of Australia resemble those of Africa; and the progress which science has made, in the invention of gas, and the various applications of steam and electricity, have not only altered the

aspects of our streets and the face of our country, but have altered the life, public and private, of ourselves. England may almost be said to have been in a transition-state during the last century. Arousing, after the revival of letters, when the religious bigotry which had held her in chains was conquered, and people began to interchange and compare ideas through the extension of the press, she languidly shook off her fetters and began the work of improvement; but her plans were not yet properly matured, and her social arrangements appear at times strange and eccentric. Out of them our own customs have grown, but they are so changed as to preserve little or no likeness of the originals. Our *criminal code* might be the code of a different country, for all the resemblance it bears to that of 1720—our *modes of travelling* are as much like those which our grandsires pursued, as a locomotive is like a packhorse—our *newspapers*, how different from the diminutive sheets of the last century!—our trim *policeman*, how little he resembles the aged sentinel who woke our grandfathers up every hour in the night, to tell them what o'clock it was!—our well-kept *roads*, how improved upon the old roads, abounding in holes and ruts!—our *cities*, a blaze of light at night, seem to throw the subject of street appearances a hundred years ago into a deeper darkness. Would it, then, be an unprofitable task to inquire into the state in which generations, removed from us only by one or two, existed, and to preserve some memorials of their domestic habits and customs—to collect, in illustration of the history of public affairs, facts connected with every-day life, and to place and arrange them in our Museum? We think not. We may alternately have cause for congratulation or for regret, as we see the changes which time has effected; if the former, it should make us more contented

with our condition; if the latter, it will open our eyes to the means of improving it.

Why should we allow this particular century to roll away into the ocean of history, without analysing each drop of which it was composed? There is yet a chance of ascertaining how the people who then existed passed their time—how they travelled—how they dressed—what they did, said, and thought; and shall we reject this information, and slight the subject, because it can boast no high antiquity?

Our Museum will, we think, contain some curious specimens, and we will do our best to label and describe them—putting, as it were, the EIGHTEENTH CENTURY carefully away in our cabinet for more able philosophers than ourselves to moralise upon. Such sketches as may be offered of the men and women of the time will be drawn by themselves; the descriptions of their ways of living taken from the books in which they have related them—genuine, authentic, and contemporary; and no assertion will be made but upon the best authority.

Of such materials, then, our Museum will be composed. We throw it open, and invite those who are curious about the life their fathers led before them, to come and see. It is but patchwork, but it is the panorama of a hundred years ago—a view no longer obscured by the fogs and mists of time, for the leading features may be discerned and brought back to the eye.

We have swept the dust from our specimens—come and look at them.



## CHAPTER II.

## FASHIONABLE LIFE.

THE follies of fashion have always been considered legitimate marks for the satirist and the playwright to aim their shafts at, which have frequently done more execution among these flimsy trappings of civilisation than the heavy artillery discharged against them by the philosopher or the divine. Addison, and the other essayists, and Fielding, and his brother novelists, knew how to expose the trumpery in the light in which its transparency was the most obvious, and yet Fashion, poor silly thing! remained true to its principles, at the sacrifice of its reputation; the works of these keen and clever observers were no sooner sought after from their intrinsic value, than she, poor suicide! true to her governing rule of following in the steps of the wealthy and the most shining characters, put her stamp upon the very publications which laughed her to scorn; purchased the ink that poisoned the feathered dart with which they pierced her; in fact, signed the bill of indictment which they had prepared against her. No publications of their time it was more "fashionable" to read and speak of than "The Tatler," "The Spectator," and "The Guardian;" yet what were the avowed purposes with which they were written? "To correct," says the opening address of

"The Tatler," "the follies, foibles, and fashions of the time."

But it is always so. Every sly innuendo to which we may be equally open, we consider is levelled at our neighbour, and laugh him to scorn, not thinking, or not knowing, we are enjoying a good joke upon ourselves. And thus the world of fashion cried "Good! good!" to the very figure which it saw but did not recognise in the looking-glass which the essayists and satirists held up to it.

Several of these features of the fashionable world of the last century were so prominent as to demand a separate chapter to themselves, but we may take a general glance at the prevailing tastes and occupations of the "ton," the "beau monde," the "quality," the "town," or whatever other distinctive appellation it may have gone by.

In the last century, the fashionable world resided much nearer to the smoke of London than would be now considered beneficial to the complexions of a generation which has grown more sparing of the use of paint and cosmetics. The fashionable world disdained not Holborn, and was very aristocratic in Bloomsbury; Bedford-row, Bloomsbury-square, Brunswick-square, Mecklenburg-square, with the streets thereunto appertaining, were its habitations early in the century; then, defying even highwaymen and burglars in its anxiety to escape the threatened invasion of the "merchant princes" from their mansions in Broad-street, Billiter-square, Goodman's-fields, and Bishopsgate, it pushed as far as Hanover-square, Gower-street, and Great Coram-street; thence it dispersed, as the city carrion trod upon its toes, into Piccadilly and Pall-mall. *Now* it has gone mad, and the impertinence of citizens and traders, who attempted to intrude within its sacred precincts, has forced it to emigrate to the for-

merly unheard-of regions of Shepherd's Bush, Notting-hill, or Pimlico.

The rents at the West-end of the town appear to have been very moderate in Swift's time; the expense of the journey to and fro was sufficient to exclude the city man of business *then*. Under date "September 21st, 1710," the Dean informs Stella that he has taken lodgings in Bury-street, "the first floor, a dining-room and bed-chamber, at eight shillings a week." This, too, he calls "plaguy dear," and thinks "it will be expensive." In 1733, Alderman Barber (then Lord Mayor) complains to him of his chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Pilkington, giving "the extravagant sum of thirty pounds a year for lodgings," when, if he had lived in the city, he might have got them for ten or twelve. (*Apropos* of rooms and lodgings: the art of paper-hanging was, at this time, seldom called into use. As late as June 27th, 1752, Fielding, in his "Covent Garden Journal," says, "Our printed paper is scarcely distinguishable from the finest silk, and there is scarcely a modern house which hath not *one or more rooms lined with this furniture*." Previously to this time, the better sort of rooms had continued to be hung with tapestry.)

— London was then only winter-quarters, and at the time of which we were speaking, when it went out of town (which it did in May, and returned in October), the fashionable world at first resorted to Islington, "to drink the waters," to Hampstead, or to Chelsea. Swift, in his "Journal to Stella," repeatedly alludes to "Addison's country-house at Chelsea;" and, on taking lodgings there himself, talks of the beautiful scent of the new-made hay around, and says he gets quite sunburnt in his journeys to and fro, and whenever he stays late in London, he congratulates himself on having no money, so that he



cannot be robbed on his way home. That this was no burlesque, the following confirmatory extracts will show:

"Many persons arrived in town from their country-houses in Marybone." — *Daily Journal*, October 15, 1728.

"The Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole comes to town this day from Chelsea." — *Ibid.*

Among the advertisements of sales in the folio edition of the "Spectator," the mansion of Streater, junior, is described as "his country-house, being near Bolton-row, in Piccadilly."

But even at this distance, Trade hotly pressed again, and Fashion fled in dismay to Tonbridge Wells, Scarborough, Broadstairs, or Bath ("the Bath," as it was then styled). How it has left these, and sought refuge by turns at Dover, Brighton, Worthing, Hastings, Cheltenham, Leamington, Buxton, &c., is within our own memories; in despair, a discomfited fragment of it actually secreted itself at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and thence fled to Weston-super-Mare, but was, we believe, lost in the desert, or starved for want of supplies, and devoured by the hungry aborigines; while others, following the example of the Queen, place time and distance as barriers against the pursuit of Trade, and escape him by getting to the Isle of Wight or the Highlands, where the London Tradesman cannot get a day-ticket to enable him to intrude upon them. Paris, Brussels, even the Rhine, are no longer sacred to them; Baden-Baden, Rome, Florence—in none are they secure. What will be the result of this cruel persecution we know not, but may expect the fashionable world will have to take refuge in the Arctic Regions, where it will certainly be *ice-elated* enough, and whence it can send its fashions in "furs and other novelties of the winter season," by the returning whale-ships.

But, to return to the period when the world of fashion lived in Holborn, and went to Islington and Lambeth Wells to drink the waters. We do not often meet with it taking a carriage-airing in the Parks, or lounging in Kensington Gardens to hear the band; but its occupations were equally insipid. An old writer (Mackay, in his "Journey through England"), in 1724, describes its proceedings thus:—"The street called Pall-mall is the ordinary residence of all strangers, because of its vicinity to the king's palace, the park, the parliament-house, the theatres, and the chocolate and coffee-houses, where the best company frequent. We rise by time, and those that frequent great men's levees find entertainment at them till eleven, or, as in Holland, go to tea-tables. About twelve, the *beau monde* assembles in several chocolate and coffee-houses, the best of which are the Cocoa Tree and White's Chocolate-houses, the St. James's, the Smyrna, and the British Coffee-houses; and all these so near one another, that in less than an hour you see the company in them all. We are carried to these places in chairs. If it be fine weather, we take a turn in the Park till two, and if it be dirty, you are entertained at piquet or basset at White's, or you may talk politics at the Smyrna or St. James's. At two we generally go to dinner, and in the evening to the playhouse. After the play, the best company generally go to Tom's and Will's Coffee-houses, near adjoining, where there is playing at piquet and the best of conversation till midnight. Here you will see blue-and-green ribbons and stars sitting familiarly with private gentlemen, and talking with the same freedom as if they had left their quality and degrees of distance at home; or, if you like rather the company of ladies, there are assemblies at most people of quality's houses."

Besides these resorts, another favourite lounge for fashionables of both sexes was the Auction Rooms, at which articles of *vertu*, and nicknackery of all sorts, were sold; and among the evening entertainments, Fielding enumerates “plays, operas, and oratorios, masquerades and ridottos, assemblies, drums, routs, riots, and hurricanes.” At the last six of this list, card-playing, and, in fact, gambling were carried on to a terrible extent; and the four first, especially masquerades, lent a cloak to intrigue and debauchery, and proved the ruin of many of their female devotees.

Occasionally offensive as Fielding’s works undeniably are, there is no writer of his time who approaches him for a faithful portraiture of men and manners. In “Joseph Andrews” he has handed down to us the journal of a man of fashion, of a period nearly twenty years later than Mackay’s account, which we may quote as the picture, not the caricature, of a day’s existence such as a “gentleman of quality” laboured through in the year of grace 1740:

“In the morning I arose, took my great stick, and walked out in my green frock, with my hair in papers, and sauntered about till ten. Went to the Auction; told Lady B. she had a dirty face—laughed heartily at something Captain G. said (I can’t remember what, for *I did not very well hear it*)—whispered Lord —, bowed to the Duke of —, and was going to bid for a snuff-box, but did not, *for fear I should have had it.*

“From 2 to 4—dressed myself.

„ 4 to 6—dined.

„ 6 to 8—Coffee-house.

„ 8 to 9—Drury-lane Playhouse.

„ 10 to 12—Drawing-room.”



This may be presumed to have been the routine in the highest grade of the fashionable world; but our man of quality forfeited its esteem by refusing to fight a duel with an officer of whom he knew nothing, and he accordingly found himself slighted, "Not-at-homed," cut, and finally sent to Coventry by his acquaintance. Fallen from his sphere, he was content to join stars of less magnitude than his old associates, and now allied himself with a lower rank of fashionables—the beaux and loungers of the Temple, which comprised the several classes known as "Bloods," "Bucks," "Macaronies," "Biters," and "Pretty Fellows" generally. The favourite haunts of these worthies appear to have been in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, where they "made love to orange-wenches and damned plays." But, as we shall, perhaps, examine this tribe more particularly in another place, we may take leave of the portrait which Fielding has drawn us of the man of fashion, merely adding, that, after duly acquitting himself in that character, as a seducer, gambler, and debauchee of no scruples, he became surfeited with the amusements and follies of the town, and retired, a reformed and domestic man, into obscurity and a quiet country life.

Fielding, it will be seen, fixes the fashionable hour for dinner at four, but Mackay, twenty years previously, has it at two o'clock; and this is confirmed by Swift, who, we find, in his "Journal," often speaks of dining at the nobility's houses, and getting home at five, six, and seven; and, in one place, mentions dining at Secretary St. John's (Bolingbroke's) at three, and at Mr. Harley's (lord treasurer) at four. We may assume, then, that in Queen Anne's reign, the "state" dinner-hour was no later than four, and often three o'clock.

In the *Weekly Journal* of January 4th, 1735, there is an order to the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, in which three o'clock is mentioned as "the usual time of his Majesty's retiring to go to dinner."

From two o'clock to four seems to have been the general time for dinner:

"We dine exactly at two, so you will have full time to go to Canterbury after your coffee, if that is what you choose."—*Lord Holland to George Selwyn, Kingsgate, September 23rd, 1764.*

"I have a nervous headache, and want my dinner. So farewell, for it is past four."—*Earl of March to George Selwyn, January, 1767.*

"We go to-morrow to walk in Richmond Gardens, and they are all to dine here at three o'clock, that we may be in time."—*The Same to the Same, about June, 1767.*

The etiquette of the dinner-table is thus partially explained in Fielding's "Essay on Conversation:"—"When dinner is on the table, and the ladies have taken their places, *the gentlemen are to be introduced into the eating-room,*" &c.

The dinner of honest old English fare despatched, and while the wine was circulating, one gentleman would ask another, "Hob and Nob?" The other would politely acquiesce, and the two gentlemen would then touch their glasses together, and invoke health on each other, the challenger usually putting the rim of his glass a little below the rim of his friend's, who, as a matter of compliment, would make a feint of resisting the honour by lowering his own. In the case of a lady being the party challenged, the gentleman's glass was always held lowest.

A favourite promenade before dinner, answering to the drive of our modern fashionables in Hyde Park, was the

Mall in St. James's Park, where second-rate milliners resorted to note the fashions which they could not afford to procure direct from France. The coffee and chocolate-houses, levees, drawing-rooms, and auctions, filled up the day; and the evenings were spent, in the summer, at Vauxhall, Ranelagh, or Cupar's Gardens, among fireworks, "waterworks" (fountains, cascades, &c.), dancing, singing, thin sandwiches and sour wine; or, latterly, at "the little theatre in the Haymarket;" and, in winter, at the "play-houses" in Drury-lane and Lincoln's Inn-fields. It was considered "state" to proceed by water to Vauxhall, as there are few who have read and (which is almost the same) admired Addison's masterly conception of "Sir Roger de Coverley," can forget. The "Spring Garden" there alluded to was afterwards known as Vauxhall; and it may be well to note, *en passant*, that in those days "Burton ale and a slice of hung beef" seem to have been among the favourite viands and drinks provided for the visitors.

Until nearly the whole of Europe became embroiled in one general war, and the Continent was closed, more particularly to Englishmen, it had been customary for all young men of birth and rank to conclude their education by making what was called "the grand tour." It was far more of a system than at present; in defiance of the obstacles in the way of travelling at that time, in defiance of its perils, without regard to its tediousness or cost, the grand tour must be made, or the education was not completed, and the young man lost caste accordingly. On leaving college he was dismissed to the Continent, where he rambled, gambled, and idled for three years, under the charge of some clergyman without a living, who was his



companion and tutor; winding up his tour with a stay at Paris, whence it was, generally, that his worthy father received cargoes of bills and acceptances for payment, drawn to meet losses at cards, and other extravagances of the debauched life into which he had plunged; for as the tutor of the minor often expected to become the chaplain of the peer or baronet, when his estate should come to him, he seldom ventured to check the young heir in his wild career; and the brightest prospects were blighted, the finest estates mortgaged, the most robust constitutions impaired, the most promising intellects clouded, and the worst vices contracted, in this grand tour. We may readily conceive that the tutor sent home favourable reports of the progress of his *protégé*, who was supposed to be acquiring the polished manners of the Continent, or the information and knowledge which were to fit him for the character of an accomplished gentleman, whilst, perhaps, he was becoming an inveterate *roué*, dividing his time between the gaming-table, the theatres, and the ballet-girls; instead of measuring the heights of mountains, sketching alpine scenery, poring over the contents of museums, and making notes of natural phenomena, great works of art, relics of antiquity, or local customs. *Notes* he certainly made—and issued, but they were of a kind that often opened the eyes of a parent, who was not very well inclined to honour them. In all these shifts for money, the tutor was ever ready to form schemes and pretences for raising the necessary cash, or concealing the way in which it was spent, till his charge returned to take possession of the family property, an irreclaimable spendthrift, an inveterate gambler, and a consummate scoundrel; while the tutor, in the guise of a chaplain,

became a pensioner on his bounty, an attendant at his board, and a participator in every excess and intemperance of his "gay" patron and his dissolute associates. There were, of course, honourable exceptions, and many came home with that polish and refinement which travel is calculated to give; but to the thoughtless, the weak-minded, and weak-principled, the grand tour was a dangerous ordeal, especially at a time when the prevailing qualities of young men of fashion were such as the Earl of Oxford describes in his letter to Swift, dated August 8th, 1734:—"He" (the young Duke of Portland) "is free from the prevailing qualifications of the present set of young people of quality, such as gaming, sharpening, pilfering, lying, &c."

Amorous intrigue was one of the reigning vices of the last century. It was carried on more openly than in more recent times, and was thought even necessary, to give a man the character of a man of the world, as well as a man of fashion, that he should have been connected in an illicit manner with some of the reigning toasts and fashionable beauties. The *Town and Country Magazine* owed a great portion of its success to the *tête-à-têtes*, or histories of intrigue, which it published in each month's impression, with copper-plate portraits of the hero and heroine, so that, by the aid of the initials, every one at all acquainted with the world of fashion could identify them.

And yet the ladies of the eighteenth century were an innocent, pastoral tribe, all rural simplicity and playful archness, looking rather out of place, perhaps, when contrasted with their painted cheeks and pencilled eyebrows, but yet all very pretty and delightful in their way. They appear to have played, and attempted to blend, two widely different characters; sometimes assuming the dress and

manners of the ladies of pleasure, and then the artlessness of rustic hoydens, tending flocks and herds, talking about their admiration of rural pastimes, decking their hair with wreaths of wild-flowers, which they had culled from the fields and hedges, and professing a most romantic love of Nature and her works. The portraits of the Honourable Miss A., or the young Lady B., represented youthful females surrounded by flocks of sheep, and, crooks in hand, reclining gracefully against a tree, listening to the mournful ditty of some love-sick shepherd; and all the young misses, to whom were inscribed in the magazines long odes and acrostics (for acrostics were "fashionable" eighty years ago), were Phillises and Chloës, and Phœbes and Cœlias; and the young gentlemen whom the Muses inspired to write the odes were all Damons, Eugenios, and Palæmons. This affectation was carried to an extent that often afforded some ludicrous contrasts, and you might occasionally see one of these artificial shepherdesses, painted and embroidered, listening to the advances of an amorous swain in the box of a London theatre!

These same ladies, too, in the simplicity of their nature, would hold perfect levees in their chambers; nay, even in bed, under the pretence of being indisposed, and without any particular regard to the sex of their visitors.

Visits of condolence on the death of relatives were generally received in bed; thus Swift, in his "Journal," says, on visiting Lady Betty Butler, on the death of her sister, Lady Ashburnham: "The jade was in bed, in form, and she did so cant she made me sick." This was too monstrous a practice for Addison to tolerate—the pure and beautifully simple morality of the "Spectator" revolted against it—and he thus ridicules one of these interviews: "The lady, though willing to appear undrest,



had put on her best looks, and painted herself for our reception. Her hair appeared in a very nice disorder, as the nightgown, which was thrown upon her shoulder, was ruffled with great care. \* \* \* It is a very odd sight that beautiful creature makes when she is talking politics, with her tresses flowing about her shoulders, and examining that face in the glass, which does such execution upon all the rude standers-by. How prettily does she divide her discourse between her women and her visitors! What sprightly transitions does she make, from an opera or a sermon to an ivory comb or a pincushion! How have we been pleased to see her interrupted in an account of her travels by a message to her footman, and holding her tongue in the midst of a moral reflection by applying the tip of it to a patch! But more particularly when her male *valet-de-chambre*" (for ladies in high life employed male chamberlains to perform many of the offices of the lady's-maid), "in dressing her hair, allowed her beautiful tresses to hang in dishevelled but lovely disorder upon her shoulders."

Hogarth has also happily ridiculed these dressing-room levees in his series of "Marriage à la Mode." The gentleman with his hair in papers, surrounded by his professors and admirers; the lady, under the operation of the curling-tongs, listening to the divine who lounges on the couch by her side, while the *friseur*, in his inquisitive curiosity, is allowing the tongs to singe her hair; the little black boy, with his toys, at her feet, "make up" the toilette-scene of a fashionable married couple. In the "Rake's Progress," Hogarth has again bequeathed to us a graphic illustration of these toilette levees. Here the man of fashion, in his *déshabillé*, is surrounded by professors—the dancing-master, the French teacher of the small-sword, the English master of quarterstaff, the landscape-gardener,

anxious to get the *rake* in his hands, the professor of music at the harpsichord, the bravo, the poet, the jockey, and a group of tailors, peruke-makers, milliners, &c. The fashionable taste for cock-fighting is illustrated by the pictures which hang round the room; and the rage for Italian singers, by the long list of presents sent to Farinelli the day after his first performance.

But these levees were not always mere compliances with a fashionable custom; they were often had recourse to to serve political purposes; and the captivating charms of a minister's lady at her toilette have won support to governments which have lost all other means of gaining it. It is said that the second daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, known as "the Little Whig," ravished many votes from the opposite party by her fascinating airs and graces at the toilette levees. Her mother, that terrible old Sarah, was a model in one respect of a type of female aristocracy whose existence we can scarcely be led to believe in, but for the testimony of Fielding and his brother novelists. Lord Campbell relates ("Lives of the Chief Justices") that the Duchess, calling, in 1738, on Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield, to consult him, would not leave her name; but his clerk, in describing her, said, "I could not make out, sir, who she was, but *she swore so dreadfully, that she must be a lady of quality.*" Horace Walpole ("Memoirs of the Reign of George III."), speaking of the evidence produced in the trial for *crim. con.* in which the Earl of Grosvenor was plaintiff, and the Duke of Cumberland defendant (1756), says the correspondence was then read, "Yet to the lady's honour be it said, that, *bating a few oaths*, which sounded more masculine than tender, the advantage in grammar, spelling, and style was all in her favour."

The little black boys and the monkeys, which Hogarth so frequently introduces into his pictures, were the pets of the ladies of the time, just as poodle-dogs have since become. In the "Taste in High Life" we have both a black boy and a full-dressed monkey; the latter, with an eye-glass, bag-wig, solitaire, laced hat, and ruffles, is perusing a bill of fare, which promises "*pour dîner, cocks'-combs, ducks'-tongues, rabbits'-ears, fricasee of snails, gras d'œuf beurré,*"—a satire upon the fashionable taste for French and eccentric cookery. The lady of the house, grotesquely dressed in stiff brocade, is showing to her visitor, a gentleman with a large muff, long queue, and feathered hat, one of those specimens which it was then a fashionable taste to collect—a small cup and saucer of old china, which she appears to consider a perfect gem.

The attitude of the gentleman, even, is a study from contemporary manners. Miss Hawkins, in describing the personal appearance of Horace Walpole, tells us that the mincing air was indispensable to the character of the fine gentleman: "He always entered a room in that style of affected delicacy *which fashion had made almost natural*—*chapeau bas* between his hands, as if he wished to compress it, or under his arm, knees bent, and feet on tiptoe, as if afraid of a wet floor."

There is scarcely a single work of Hogarth's which does not afford us a glimpse of fashionable follies. The unobtrusive but ingenious manner in which he makes even the most trivial accessories of his pictures tell his moral, or slyly point his satire, will frequently be serviceable to us in investigating the manners and customs of which we are collecting specimens; and if we may occasionally be thought too severe upon the century in bringing forward



what was ludicrous or vicious in its composition, we more than atone for it in merely repeating the names of those who help us, by the vivid efforts of their pens and pencils which they have left behind them, to illustrate its peculiarities; for who can feel disrespect for the period, when he is thus casually reminded that such men as Hogarth, and the satirists and authors whom we take for our authorities, belonged to it?

## CHAPTER III.

## COSTUME.

IN the particulars of costume we have often thought that our grandfathers displayed more taste than we have been able to infuse into many of our modern fashions. There was something grand, commanding, even dignified, in the broad and embroidered coat, the long waistcoat, the full wig; the mere cock of the hat could be made to convey a dozen different impressions to the beholder; the lace ruffles were, perhaps, dandified and effeminate, but there was something rich even in them.

We have now lying before us an old magazine, in which there is a portrait of a great somebody of the time, apparently a conspicuous member of the *haut ton*, and as he was, no doubt, an exquisite of the first water, and followed the prevailing fashions to the very letter, the picture may be considered in a wider sense—as the portrait of the English gentleman of the eighteenth century. Mark the studied precision of his dress—mark the stiff bearing of every limb, as if each thread had given him notice that it was stretched to the utmost, and must crack on the slightest provocation. From his toes to the very extremities of his hair he is full-dressed according to the notions of the time.

Under his arm is the cocked hat which *was* intended to be worn, but which he cannot venture to put on lest it disturb the gravity of his wig; his head is covered with white powder, and his face with "rouge et blanc;" his cravat, "white as the driven snow" (the black stock was become obsolete by this time), is formally tied beneath his chin, and his tail hangs in solemn state from the back of his head; his embroidered coat, with its ample skirts, is thrown gracefully aside, to exhibit the gaudy waistcoat and its capacious pockets, which, in its turn, reaches just low enough to avoid concealing his glittering knee-buckles; his red plush inexpressibles, silk stockings, and highly polished shoes (which even threaten to eclipse the brilliancy of their silver or brilliant buckles)—their high red heels, which tilt him forward till he describes an acute angle with the ground; the lace ruffles that flutter at his wrists; the sword that dangles at his heels, or the stout cane that reaches almost to his head, complete his dress, and combine in giving to a form of no very exquisite proportions an air of grandeur and magnificence which the sparks of modern times severely lack.

The general costume of gentlemen in 1760 has been thus described:

"Square-cut coats and long-flapped waistcoats, with pockets in them, nearly meeting the stockings, which were still drawn up over the knee so high as nearly to conceal the breeches; large hanging cuffs to the coat-sleeves, and lace ruffles; the skirts of the coat distended with wire or buckram, just in the fashion of the ladies' whalebone-extended petticoats; blue or scarlet silk stockings, lace neck-cloths, square-toed, short-quartered shoes, with high red heels and small buckles; riding-wigs, bag-wigs, nightcap-wigs, tie-wigs, and bob-wigs, and small three-cornered hats,



laced with gold or silver galloon, and sometimes trimmed with feathers."

But perhaps the best idea may be formed from the following description of St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke:—"He was dressed in the extremity of fashion, and wore a light blue velvet coat, with immense cuffs, richly embroidered with silver; amber-coloured stockings; crimson leather shoes, fastened with diamond buckles, and a diamond-hilted sword, with a long silken tassel dangling from the handle. His cravat was of point-lace, and his hands were almost hidden by exaggerated ruffles of the same material; his hat was laced with silver, and feathered at the edges, and he wore his own brown hair in ringlets of some eighteen or twenty inches in length, tied behind with a long streaming ribbon" ("*red ribbon*," says Mr. Ainsworth, in his "*St. James's*," and adds, "a mode which he himself had introduced"); "his handkerchief, which he carried in his hand, was strongly perfumed, and he diffused an odour around him as he walked, as if he had just risen from a bath of roses."

This description must be taken, however, *cum grano salis*, as the reader will remember that Bolingbroke was a bit of a dandy.

A dress of George I. is thus described by Horace Walpole:—"A dark tie-wig, a plain coat, waistcoat and breeches of snuff-coloured cloth, with stockings of the same colour, and a blue ribbon over all:" and a summer visiting-dress of Walpole himself was—"A lavender suit, the waistcoat embroidered with a little silver, or of white silk, worked in the tambour, partridge-silk stockings, and gold buckles, ruffles and frill, generally lace."

Goldsmith, always a showy dresser, had, according to the books of Mr. William Filby, tailor, at the sign of the

Harrow, in Water-lane, a suit described as of "Tyrian bloom, satin grain, and garter-blue silk breeches, price 8*l.* 2*s.* 7*d.*; a blue velvet suit, 21*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*;" and, some time later, "a green, half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with silk; a queen's-blue dress suit; a half-dress suit of ratteen, lined with satin, a pair of silk stocking-breeches, and another pair of a bloom colour."

So much for the *tout ensemble*. We may as well, perhaps, devote a few words to the separate details of these costumes, and more particularly the head-dress.

The cocked, or three-cornered hat, was generally lined with silk, and the flaps looped up, sometimes with gold or silver lace, to a button on the crown; it was capable of considerable compression, from the very nature of its shape, and was generally crushed under the arm when its wearer entered a house.

*JK* The wigs were of the most fickle fashion, sometimes fringed with thick curls, sometimes fluttering in ringlets, sometimes bristling with short, crisp curls—now putting forth a long pendulous tail; then *cur*-tailed, with a mere sprout hanging down to the collar; and finally, boasting only a large bow of black or brown silk at the back. The "campaign-wig" of 1702 was very full, curled, and eighteen inches in length to the front, with deep locks. Other varieties of wigs were known by the names of "the story," "the bob," "the Busby," "the scratch," "the bag," "the brown George," "the riding-wig," "the nightcap wig," "the periwig," "the tie," "the queue," &c. "The tie" was the wig which we described as having a bow or tie affixed to the back of it, but which degenerated into a string of silk or plaited hair, called from its similarity to that appendage, a "pigtail." These wigs were somewhat expensive (and certainly superfluous) articles of dress, as

may be imagined when we state that, such was the demand for good natural hair for their manufacture, that the price was 3*l.* per ounce.

Now, why gentlemen could not be content with the hair which nature gave them, we cannot conceive; the same tyrannical fashion which compelled them to part with their own locks, and buy and wear other people's, might, with equal propriety, have forced them to have their teeth drawn, and the deficiency supplied by false ones.

Goldsmith, more bitter in his satires than Addison, deals a blow at this fashion, in his "Citizen of the World:" "To appear wise, nothing is more requisite here than for a man to borrow hair from the heads of all his neighbours, and clap it, like a bush, on his own. The distributors of law and physic stick on such quantities, that it is almost impossible, even in idea, to distinguish between the head and the hair."

The cane, to which we have alluded, was not what is now-a-days comprehended by the word—a mere walking-stick, but a stout staff, or wand, reaching almost up to the eyes of the wielder, who was stared in the face by a grotesque and hideous head, which was usually the top—it would be wrong to use the word handle. It was, in fact, the same *batôn* which we may sometimes see carried by footmen at the backs of carriages on state occasions, or (for the benefit of country readers we will be still more explicit) it was of the length and size of the "spud," an agricultural weapon which old farmers persist in carrying about with them in their war upon weeds, no matter whether they walk in the fields or on the road, as a sort of emblem of their calling and staff of office, by whose authority, and with whose aid, they *take up* all stray encroachers on the pastures or the wheat.

The large muffs which were in vogue about the middle



of the century, must, one would think, have given the gentlemen somewhat of an effeminate appearance, and were in ludicrous contrast to the warlike sword that was girt about their waists. In two of Hogarth's pictures we have examples from which to judge of the effect of these appendages of winter dress, namely, in "Taste in High Life," and in the "Arrest for Debt" scene of the "Rake's Progress."

They appear to have been most in fashion about 1760-70, and only exceptional at other periods of the century. The sporting Earl of March writes thus in 1766, to George Selwyn, at Paris: "The muff you sent me by the Duke of Richmond I like prodigiously; vastly better than if it had been of tigré, or of any glaring color—several are now making after it." And again: "Pray bring me two or three bottles of perfume to put amongst powder, and some patterns for velvets that are new and pretty." Might we not fancy it was a lady's letter, instead of a young nobleman's?—in after-years the infamous "Old Q." of Piccadilly.

Horace Walpole writes to George Montague in 1764:—"I send you a decent smallish muff, that you may put in your pocket, and it costs but fourteen shillings."

But the military appear to have been dressed most grotesquely, and specimens may be seen in Hogarth's "March to Finchley," "Masquerades at Burlington Gate," and "England;" their emblazoned conical caps appearing more like the head-dress of the victims of an *auto-da-fé* than of George II.'s British Grenadiers.

The consumption of powder by these soldiers was something enormous—not, gentle reader, gunpowder, but flour, with which their hair was dressed. It was calculated that, inasmuch as the military force of England and the Colonies was, including cavalry, infantry, militia, and fencibles,

250,000, and each man used a pound of flour per week, the quantity consumed in this way was 6500 tons per annum; capable of sustaining 50,000 persons on bread, and producing 3,059,353 quartern loaves!

The costume of the clergy does not seem to have been so arbitrary or so staid as it is now; much, no doubt, to the scandal of Parson Adams in his "gown and cassock." Here is a dress of Swift's, described by himself in his "Journal to Stella:" "My dress was light camlet, faced with red velvet, and silver buckles."

The dress of the medical profession was, according to Sir Walter Scott, "a scarlet cloak, wig, sword, and cane;" and physicians are pointed out in Fielding's "Journey from this World to the Next," as "gentlemen in tie-wigs, carrying amber-headed canes."

Towards the close of the century we may find the fashions of gentlemen's dress gradually verging into what we may call modern costume. The flaps of the cocked-hat, let down, displayed the low crown; and the three corners rounded off, it became somewhat of the shape of the round hat, into which it ultimately melted, if we may be allowed the expression; the crown, however, still continuing low and close to the head. In the mean while, when the coat was buttoned, the ample skirts became inconvenient, and were gradually shorn, till, about the year 1780, a coat nearer to the shape of what was called the "New-market cut," or, perhaps, approximating still more closely to the Quaker's, made its appearance, and, without any violent changes, the dress of 1720 may be traced to have almost imperceptibly glided into that of 1800; the various trimmings and trappings being abandoned, and the showy colours and rich materials giving place to more sober and less costly ones.

We have been induced, perhaps, to be more prolix in

our details of gentlemen's costume, from a nervous anxiety respecting the task which was to follow it—to describe the fashions in ladies' dress, which prevailed at the same time. So fickle, so extravagant, so eccentric (to use the mildest terms) as were the varieties of female costume, what pen shall describe them?

And then how to give each article its proper designation!—Ye gods, assist us. Our prayer is heard, for we have laid our hands upon a ready-written description of the Princess Mary's dress; but we confess it is worse than Greek to us.

“There was one blue tabby, embroidered with silver; four sacks, all trimmed, one in silver tissue, faced and doubled before with pink-coloured satin, and trimmed with a silver *point d'Espagne*. The stiff-bodied gown she was to be married in had an embroidery upon white, with gold and colours, very rich, and a stuff on a gold ground, prodigiously fine, with flowers shaded up to the middle of the breadths, like painting, and a kind of blue and embossed work of blue and silver towards the edges. They said that, before the stuff was woven, the gold itself weighed eighteen pounds. There were four more fine gowns, four fine-laced Brussels heads, and two extremely fine point ones, with ruffles and tippets, six French caps and ruffles,” &c.

One of the dresses of Queen Caroline (the consort of George II.) was, we are told, “a robe of purple velvet made low in front, the upper part of the stomacher and the short loose sleeves edged with stiffened point-lace, the hair divided in the centre, raised in high and ample curls above the head, looped behind by a string of magnificent pearls, and descending in clustering ringlets down her back.” This is certainly more reasonable. Another dress of this period was “a blue and gold atlas gown, with a



wrought petticoat edged with gold, shoes laced with silver, lace cap and lappets." But the style immediately preceding this was "a flaming petticoat of scarlet cloth, under a short gown of yellow brocade, worked with gold—an immense stomacher worked with gold."

Let us see if we can transfer the portrait which lies on our table to paper, and copy, with pen and ink, the sketch so elaborately drawn by the artist's pencil. It is a full length of "Margaret Caroline Rudd," says the inscription at the bottom of the print, "who was tried and acquitted at the Old Bailey on a charge of forgery." Is it possible? Has that fair form been confined in a dreary cell? Have those white arms been rudely grasped by the constable and gaoler? Has that pleasing countenance formed the grand centre of attraction to the eyes of a crowded court? "Ay," replies stern Truth, "and those taper fingers, perhaps, *did a deed* which might have encircled that slender neck with the hangman's rope, if the jury had not, at the earnest recommendation of the judge, leaned to the side of mercy!"

The head-dress of this captivating captive it is almost beyond the power of modern pen to essay a description of. An immense pyramid of hair, rising in smooth and unruffled stateliness perpendicularly from her head, is surmounted by an elegant turban: her cheeks have the usual complement of paint, and her eyebrows are neither more nor less pencilled than those belonging to the generality of ladies of her time: when we at length find an article of dress (which we had almost despaired of seeing), it is an elegantly-laced stomacher: the robing of the gown, open in front to display the richness of the petticoat beneath it, and the single flounce that encircles it, are not dissimilar from those of recent times, but the long lace ruffles, elaborately fringed, worked, and ornamented,

which are pendulous from the elbows, may almost be heard fluttering in the breath of agitation that pervades the court. This, then, is a specimen from the year 1771;—let us now glance at a portrait of a somewhat earlier date.

Ho, ho! what buxom lady is this? or is it only the bust of a female placed upon the top of a sugar hogshead? Nay, now we have it—it is the hoop of which we have heard so often that distends that costly petticoat till at last it appears like a Mongolfier balloon of respectable dimensions. We remember reading a humorous letter in an old magazine, in which a husband complains that he had lately married a lady of apparently comely proportions, who, in her *déshabillé*, became a dwarf of scarcely four feet in height. And how, think you, gentle reader, did this deception arise? Her head-dress measured some eighteen inches, and the heels of her shoes elevated her to the extent of almost six more, so that, when divested of these ornaments, which gave her the appearance of six feet of flesh and bone, she became reduced to little more than half that height. But her circumference decreased to a still more alarming degree on the removal of the hoop, and the stately pyramid of silks and satins, which had stalked along all day, dwindled down at night to an insignificant pigmy of scarcely half the artificial size which she had assumed.

Hey, presto, fly! the scene is again changed, and here we are sitting in a theatre at the early part of the eighteenth century. But what is to be seen? Each female countenance is concealed, not, as afterwards, with paint, but by—a *mask*! Let us begone, since Beauty hides her face.

We are now in more civilised times; it is the year 1780. But be cautious! Step carefully, or, perchance,

you may tread upon the train of the lady who is by some yards in advance of you, and which is collecting and elevating the dust, greatly to the discomfort and inconvenience of the succeeding passengers' eyes.

Well done, prudent and thrifty dame—that was a wise fashion of thine, the looping-up of those costly trains; for why should the streets of London be swept with silk? Now it hangs in graceful drapery around thee, instead of dragging in slovenly prodigality at thy heels.

The various styles of female head-gear, and the different fashions of dressing the hair, were so numerous, and, at the same time, so monstrous, that, while we should wish to give a description of them all, we fear it is next to impossible. In the reign of Queen Anne, the hair was “frizzled, crisped, and tortured into wreaths and borders, and underpropped with forks, wires,” &c., and the gigantic head-dresses appear to have been for a time abandoned. “There is not so variable a thing in nature,” says the “Spectator,” “as a lady’s head-dress. Within my own memory I have known it rise and fall above thirty degrees. About ten years ago it shot up to a very great height, insomuch that the female part of our species were much taller than the men. The women were of such enormous stature that we appeared as grasshoppers before them. At present, the whole sex is in a manner diminished and sunk into a race of beauties that seems almost another species. I remember several ladies who were once very near seven feet high, that at present want some inches of five. How they came to be thus curtailed I cannot learn. Whether the whole sex be at present under any penance which we know nothing of, or whether they have cast their head-dresses in order to surprise us with something of that kind which shall be entirely new; or whether some of the tallest of the sex,



being too cunning for the rest, have contrived the method to make themselves sizeable, is still a secret, though I find most are of opinion they are, at present, like trees, new lopped and pruned, that will certainly sprout up and flourish with greater heads than before."

The "Spectator" was not wrong in his last conjecture; but it was some time before these pollard ladies began to put forth fresh shoots, which were to rise to a more ridiculous height than had been previously known. During the reigns of the first two Georges we meet few of these exaggerated heads, but soon after the accession of George III. the rage burst out anew.

In 1732, a kind of gipsy hat seems to have been in vogue, jauntily worn on one side, and displaying the lappets of a neat cap beneath. In 1770, the out-of-doors head-dress was a flat hat, not worn in the ordinary manner, but ingeniously attached to the head, so as to stand up perpendicularly on its side, with the top of the crown and trimmings almost in a line with the face, thus exposing the whole of the back and crown of the head, which were clothed in a kind of hood. This absurd fashion was rendered necessary by the immense height to which the hair was again carried, as the following extract from the toilette directions contained in a Pocket-book of the period will show:

"Every lady who wishes to dress her hair with taste and elegance, should first purchase an elastic cushion exactly fitted to her head. Then, having combed out her hair thoroughly, and *properly thickened it with powder and pomatum*, let her turn it over her cushion in the reigning model. Let her next divide the sides into divisions for curls, and adjust their number and size from the same models. If the hair be not of a sufficient length and thickness, it will be necessary to procure an addition to it,

which is always to be had, ready-made, and matched to every colour."

We forbear entering into the disgusting details of the opening of one of these heads (which was necessary every nine months), and the spectacle of filth that then came to light.

The prevailing taste in all the specimens before us, seems to have been to comb the hair upwards from the forehead over the pillow, or cushion, and at the top of this pyramid was, sometimes nicely poised, a small cap—sometimes it was gracefully woven at the extreme top into bands garlanded with strings of pearls, or surmounted with feathers—by some confined in a handsome handkerchief, which was tied beneath the chin—by others arranged into the form of a helmet, or other devices.

Mr. Fairholt, in his "Costume in England," gives specimens in which the pyramid was surmounted by figures of butterflies, caterpillars, coaches and horses, &c., in blown glass. This was the vogue about 1780.

In 1772, the pyramid of hair had a string of curls up each side, and a bow at the top; in 1778, it had risen to an immense height, widening as it rose, till it terminated in a large out-spread mob-cap; while from the bottom, below the ears, and resting almost upon the shoulders, hung a pair of gigantic curls; in 1780, it was thrown back obliquely over the head, and decorated with light crisp curls, or else carried up in a conical shape with a bow at the top; in 1783, the whole of the hair was brushed into five or six loose and immense curls, with a long tail hanging nearly to the waist; in 1785, it resembled a modern judge's wig, with a feather branching from the top; in 1786, it was spread out over a large square cushion, which extended on each side down to the

ears (so as to leave the face as it were the centre of a square), and allowed to hang in four or five tails, of which the middle one was the longest, at the back; in 1790, it was carried up into one huge bunch, or knot, from the back part, high above the head; in fact, the fashions were so variable, that we have not yet named even a tithe of the different styles.

A song of the time thus ridiculed these enormities:

Give Betsy a bushel of horsehair and wool,  
Of paste and pomatum a pound,  
Ten yards of gay ribbon to deck her sweet skull,  
And gauze to encompass it round.  
Her cap flies behind, for a yard at the least,  
And her curls meet just under her chin,  
And those curls are supported, to keep up the jest,  
By a hundred, instead of *one* pin.

The use of paste and pomatum here alluded to was necessary to give the hair a consistency and strength, to make it compact and remain in the form in which it was arranged.

“Still, however,” says a magazine article of the day, “though nothing supports and nourishes the hair so much as powder and pomatum, yet it should be combed out by the roots with a small comb twice or three times in a fortnight.”

The inconvenience of this style of head-dress is facetiously described in a letter from a lady, who complains of the coaches then in use being so low that she was compelled to sit almost doubled up, to avoid crushing her hair against their roofs.

In addition to these singular contrivances for arranging and dressing their own hair, the ladies, following the example of the other sex, resorted to the disgusting practice of wearing wigs; or, as they were called, “*têtes*” and



"heads," which were, about the year 1780 (when they were most in vogue), very expensive, often costing thirty or forty pounds apiece. These wigs were likewise well powdered; and even the application of this powder would seem to have required some taste and judgment, "for," says an old writer, "a hairdresser ought to be thoroughly versed in physiognomy, and must have a particular regard to the complexion and features of those he is employed to dress, that he may use powder in a becoming proportion, and dress the hair to the dimensions of the face."

In those days he was a man of some consequence, this hairdresser, and many an unfortunate martyr of fashion has been detained at home from important business, waiting in helpless *déshabillé* for the arrival of his perruquier, unless his purse or condition rescued him from this thralldom by giving him a valet. *Apropos* of wigs, and digressing for a moment from the branch of our subject at which we have arrived, we must preserve the following anecdote: In 1764 a temporary freak of fashion banished wigs from the heads of "the quality," and the consequence was that the large body of wig-makers in London saw nothing but poverty staring them in the face, to avoid which they considered the legislature bound to pass an act immediately, rendering it penal for the gentry to wear their own hair. A petition praying for the immediate introduction of such a law was accordingly drawn up, and, after being numerously signed, was carried, on February 11, 1765, in solemn procession to St. James's to be presented to the king. This proceeding was productive of a laughable riot, for the mob, perceiving that many members of the procession wore no wigs themselves, seized them, and forcibly sheared them of their hair in the public street.

But to return to the ladies. A very prevalent practice among the sex in the last century was that of taking snuff, and we have been credibly informed that it was no unusual sight in a theatre for one-half of its female occupants to be tapping their snuff-boxes, previously to indulging in a pinch of their favourite dust between the scenes, while the other half were drawing out their paint-boxes and laying a fresh coating on their cheeks, when perspiration or any other cause had removed the *rouge*.

The reader who is conversant with the works of Hogarth (and where is the one who is not?) cannot fail to have noticed the black patches which disfigure the faces of his female characters. Never, surely, was such a barbarous fashion as that of sticking upon the face of beauty an unsightly black patch of court-plaister! These "beauty spots," or "mouches," as they were called, it was sometimes the fashion to wear on the chin—at another, on the right-hand corner of the mouth—at a third time on the left cheek; the precise position either varying with the fancies of the period, or being meant to denote the politics of the wearers. A correspondent of the "Spectator," in satirising ladies' tastes in books, says he found in one of their bookcases "Locke on the Human Understanding," with a paper of patches in it; and Goldsmith, in his "Citizen of the World," makes his Chinese philosopher note this folly in rather severe terms: "They like to have the face of various colours, as among the Tartars of Coreki, frequently sticking on with spittle little black patches on every part of it, except on the top of the nose, which I have never seen with a patch. You'll have a better idea of their manner of placing these spots when I have finished a map of an English face, patched up to the

fashion, which shall shortly be sent, to increase your curious collection of paintings, medals, and monsters."

But even this was more excusable than the odious practice of wearing masks.

The embellishments which nature received from paint were so considerable, that the "Spectator" says of the ladies of 1709, "There are some so exquisitely skilful in this way, that, give them but a tolerable pair of eyes to set up with, and they will make bosom, lips, cheeks, and eyebrows, by their own industry."

Years afterwards, Lady Coventry, one of "those goddesses the Gunnings," is said to have caused her fatal illness by laying the paint so thickly on her cheeks as to check the perspiration.

A famous instrument of coquetry, with which all ladies were equipped, was the fan. Our invaluable authority, the "Spectator," found it necessary to attack the airs and antics which were displayed in the use of this seemingly insignificant toy. "There is scarcely an emotion of the mind," he says, "which does not produce a suitable agitation of the fan, insomuch that, if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes." He then humorously describes an academy for instruction in the use of the fan, and a facetious correspondent professes to have undertaken the duty of drilling the ladies, who thus go through their evolutions: "The ladies who carry fans under me are drawn up twice a day in my great hall, where they are instructed in the use of their arms, and exercised by the following words of command: 'Handle your fans,' 'Unfurl your fans,' 'Discharge your fans,' 'Ground your fans,' 'Recover your fans,' 'Flutter your fans.'" The opportunity which the grounding of the fans and recovering of the



fans afforded for the display of a little gallantry on the part of the gentlemen, and of coquetry on that of the lady, may be imagined, but of the fluttering of the fans he says: "There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the fluttering of the fan—the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter." Doubtless there was a great deal of truth in all this, but these were harmless follies, and the good-tempered "Spectator" laughed at them, till the very wielders of this formidable weapon themselves laughed with him; for it was no unkindly laugh—the "Spectator" could laugh, but he never sneered; his was no growling philosophy, no spiteful satire. He was like a fond father chiding a favourite child—there was love and kindness pervading even his corrections. The man who could conceive the beautiful character painted under the name of Sir Roger de Coverley, could infuse no bitterness into his ridicule, no malignity into his satire.

The farthingale of the seventeenth century was the parent of the "hoop" of the eighteenth, which distended the dress into most enormous proportions, commencing just below the hips. In 1709 it attracted the attention of that ever-vigilant sentinel of pure and unaffected taste, the "Spectator," whom a correspondent reports: "The petticoats which began to heave and swell before you left us, are now blown up into a most enormous concave, and rise every day more and more." And, to add to the bulk and inflation of the skirts, furbelows and flounces were introduced, giving to the dress an appearance of being "all in curl," and making the wearer look, according to Addison, "like one of those animals which in the country we call a Friesland hen." The hoop appears to have con-

tinued in favour, with but very little interruption, the greater part of the century; but, in 1766, 1770, and 1785, they were, according to the specimens of fashions collected by Malcolm, not in vogue. The "Taste in High Life" of Hogarth, painted in 1742, in ridicule of the existing fashions, displays two figures, of which it is difficult to say which is the most hideous—the old lady, wearing a dress of stiff brocade, extending at the bottom so as to give her the form of a "squat pyramid, with a grotesque head at the top of it" (to quote the words of Mr. Trussler), or the fashionable young lady, whose skirt is hooped up, and projects, like a solitary wing, from her side.

The trains, although far less objectionable, were scarcely more fortunate than the hoops—they could not escape the satire of Goldsmith. In the "Citizen of the World," the *quasi*-travelling philosopher writes to his friend, "To-day the ladies are lifted on stilts, to-morrow they lower their heels and raise their heads; their clothes, at one time, are bloated out with whalebone—at present, they have laid their hoops aside and become as thin as mermaids. All, all is in a state of continual fluctuation." \* \* \* "What chiefly distinguishes the sex at present is the train. As the lady's quality, or fashion, was once determined here by the circumference of her hoop, both are now measured by the length of her tail. Women with moderate fortunes are contented with tails moderately long; but ladies of true taste and distinction set no bounds to their ambition in this particular." Of its extravagance, he says, "A lady's train is not bought but at some expense, and after it has swept the public walks for a few evenings, is fit to be worn no longer." And of its inconvenience, he declares, "Backward she cannot go; forward she must move, but slowly; and if ever she attempts to turn round,

it must be in a circle not smaller than that described by the wheeling crocodile." He is assured that "some would have a tail though they wanted a petticoat; and others, without any other pretensions, fancied they became ladies from the addition of three superfluous yards of ragged silk. To think," he exclaims, "that all this confers importance and majesty! to think that a lady acquires additional respect from fifteen yards of trailing taffeta!"

But if little credit can be given to the ladies of the last century for the taste displayed in other portions of their dress, certainly their shoes were not calculated to redeem its character. High upon the instep, and somewhat of the shape of gentlemen's modern "Albert slippers," and with tall, red, French heels, they assuredly were no adornment to the foot, which they only served to conceal, and, at the same time, gave to the wearer an unsteady and awkward gait. The ladies' boots of modern times are far less unsightly than were these shoes, which, from the height of the heel, tilted the foot forward upon the ball of the foot and toes, to an extent which must have almost been painful, and brought the heel nearly in a line with the rise of the instep. They must, without doubt, have added to the height of the figure, but by no means contributed to its elegance.

Comparing the fashions of the gentlemen with those of the ladies, we are compelled to give the preference to the former. If there were many superfluities, and even much foppishness, there was much that was graceful and gave a dignity to the appearance; but the costume of the ladies was either conceived in such false taste, or carried to such ridiculous extremes, that the symmetry of the figure was lost, and every movement made to appear awkward, constrained, or painful.



The same cumbrousness of dress which seems to have been considered ornamental to adults, was thought necessary in the case of infants. There was a belief among grandams and nurses, that infants' bones and joints required extraordinary external support, and consequently ample provisions were made to prevent sprains and dislocations, by the baby-limbs being put in a sort of framework, composed of whalebone, wool, and strings. The chin had a pillow for its support, which went by the name of "chin stays;" and from this bandage a strap was passed down to the breast, and was called "a gop," serving to preserve the head from an undue inclination backwards. Then each sleeve was fastened tightly down to the side, lest the arms should be diverted from their due position; and the gristle of the legs was left to harden into bones and muscles, within a strong casing. Around the head was affixed a small "pad," resembling a bolster, stuffed with some soft and elastic substance, which was to answer the same purpose as the "fender" of a steam-vessel, or "buffer" of a railway carriage, and preserve it from apprehended bruises, contusions, and lacerations, from a collision with the floor or corners of the tables; and when the day of unbinding, unstrapping, and uncasing the infant *did* arrive, it was quite a domestic festival.

One would naturally have thought, that people who took such pains to preserve the infant figure from distortion, would have taken a pride in displaying the figure in its compactness and integrity when matured, instead of disguising it in forms and shapes unnatural and ungraceful.

## CHAPTER IV.

## MARRIAGE AND FUNERAL CUSTOMS.

IN traversing the streets of London, it was no uncommon sight to see a mob collected before a respectable house making the most discordant din imaginable; some with musical instruments, others with marrow-bones and cleavers, and the rest with tin-kettles, saucepans, shovels, or any implement on which they could lay their hands, and from which they might produce a sonorous noise. This was the "rough music" which always serenaded a newly-married couple, and which, although still jealously kept up in some country districts, is nearly banished from the metropolis. Hogarth, in the "Marriage of the Industrious Apprentice to his Master's Daughter" (Industry and Idleness), gives us an excellent representation of one of these scenes. The cripple known as "Philip in the Tub," who is introduced into the group, was a general attendant upon the rough music, and seldom failed to be present at a wedding. This print gave birth to the following remarks upon the practice by M. Lichtenberg, a German commentator on Hogarth: "It is the custom in England, or at least in London, for the butchers to make, before the houses of the newly-married on the morning

after the wedding, if they think it will pay them for their trouble, a kind of wild Janissary music. They perform it by striking their cleavers with the marrow-bones of the animals they have slain. To comprehend that this music is—we shall not say supportable, for that is not here the question—but that it is not entirely objectionable, we shall observe that the breadth of the English cleaver is to that of the German nearly in the same proportion as the diameter of the English ox is to that of Germany. When, therefore, properly struck, they produce no despicable clang—at least, certainly a better one than logs of wood emit when thrown to the ground.”

While on the subject of marriages, we are reminded that we have a remarkable curiosity connected with it, and must find a place on the shelves of our museum, and the pages of this its catalogue, for the Fleet Marriage System of the Eighteenth Century.

The shop-windows in Fleet-street and Ludgate-hill often displayed a notice that “weddings” were “performed within.” And, as you passed along the streets, you would be asked the astounding question, “Would you like to be married, sir?”

The terrible and cruel abuses of the Fleet Prison, under the execrable Huggins and Bambridge, were accompanied by one more ludicrous, yet of the most mischievous tendency. Previously to the passing of the New Marriage Act of 1753, which rendered the publication of banns compulsory, clergymen confined for debt in the Fleet were allowed the privilege of marrying couples within its precincts. Mr. Knight, in his amusing collection of the curiosities of all ages of British history, entitled “Old England,” mentions that one of these parsons, named Wyatt, realised, according to his own memorandum-book, 57*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.*, in fees, in a single month; that another,



William Dare, married monthly, on an average, one hundred and fifty, or two hundred couples, and was forced to have a curate to assist him; and that the most notorious of them, Keith, married one hundred and seventy-three couples in one day. When the time of the enjoyment of this privilege was limited, and on the last day allowed by the act, the 24th of March, 1753, upwards of three hundred marriages took place.

"False names, half names, or even no names at all," adds Mr. Knight, "would do with these most liberal gentry; and, if all that were not sufficient, they would get up a sham certificate of marriage, without any marriage taking place. A marriage of to-day could be dated back for a twelvemonth or two; if bride or bridegroom could not come, there was one ready to act proxy. Women who were in debt might come here, be married to a husband regularly attached to the place for the purpose, and, as soon as married, part to meet no more—he quite content, for a handsome gratuity, to be liable to all her debts—she able to laugh at all her old creditors, and take in new ones. Lastly, if money was short, you might 'go upon tick,' as the register has it." In short, it would appear they were provided with every contingency that might arise.

Idlers about Fleet Market were often amused by the sight of a carriage, surrounded by the parsons and their "touters," as coaches near the theatres are besieged by vendors of play-bills, while the cries rang round of "A parson, sir?" "I am the clerk and registrar of the Fleet." "This way, madam, that fellow will carry you to a little puddling alehouse." "Come with me! he will take you to a brandy-shop!" &c. Here we must again quote Mr. Knight for a graphic account of the marriage ceremony which ensued:—"As the party ascend the prison stairs,

and pass along the gallery, they receive various invitations to stop. A coal-heaver is especially pressing: 'This,' says he, 'is the famous Lord Mayor's chapel; you will get married cheaper here than in any other part of the Fleet!' The parson who has got the job looks daggers at him, but receives a horse-laugh in reply; and, by-the-by, the pair are fortunate—their worthy conductor is sober to-day. They enter his rooms. There is a hint about brandy and wine, which the excellent priest deals in, as well as wedlock, and both are called for; and the ceremony now proceeds, and is performed, on the whole, decently enough." "But," says Mr. Knight, with great significance, "woe betide the bridegroom if he has not made up his mind to pay handsomely, even according to the Fleet standard, otherwise he will not soon forget the Fleet parson's lesson in 'Billingsgate.'"

We may consider the Gretna marriages of the present day productive of serious mischief, but these were much more dangerous to the well-being of society and the cause of morality. No questions being asked, minors were entrapped and married, the weak-minded kidnapped into wedlock, and even some married forcibly against their will, to men whom perhaps they had never seen before. Mr. Knight copies a significant entry from one of the registers:

"William —— and Sarah ——; he dressed in a gold waistcoat like an officer; she, a beautiful young lady, with two fine diamond rings, and a black high-crowned hat, and very well dressed—at Boyce's. N.B.—There was four or five young Irish fellows seemed to me, *after the marriage was over*, to have deluded the young woman."

In the *Grub-street Journal*, No. 270, February 27th, 1735, these Fleet marriages are alluded to as "the ruinous

marriages practised in the liberties of the Fleet and thereabouts, by a sett of drunken, swearing parsons, with their myrmidons, that wear black coats, and pretend to be clerks and registers to the Fleet. These ministers of wickedness," the writer proceeds, "ply about Ludgate-hill, pulling or forcing people to some puddling alehouse or brandy-shop to be married, even on a Sunday, stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their cloathes off their backs."

There appears, then, to have been as much danger of being married in the heart of the City against your will as of being murdered. It must have been strange to hear the citizen's wife, in broad noon-day, on taking leave of a visitor, after a morning's chat, say, "Take care of yourself—mind you don't get married as you go down Ludgate-hill!" but the caution would hardly appear superfluous, when we read the statements contained in a letter to the *Grub-street Journal* which we have just quoted:

"Since Midsummer last, a young lady of birth and fortune was deluded and forced from her friends, and, by the assistance of a wry-necked swearing parson, married to an atheistical wretch, whose life is a constant practice of vice and debauchery. And, since the ruin of my relation, another lady of my acquaintance had like to have been trepanned in the following manner: The lady had appointed to meet a gentlewoman at the old playhouse in Drury-lane, but extraordinary business prevented her coming. Being alone, when the play was over, she bade a boy call a coach for the City. One dressed like a gentleman helps her into it and jumps in after her. 'Madam,' says he, 'this coach was called for me, and, since the weather is so bad, and there is no other, I beg leave to bear you company. I am going into the City, and will



set you down wherever you please.' The lady begged to be excused, but he bade the coachman drive on. Being come to Ludgate-hill, he told her his sister, who waited his coming but five doors up the court, would go with her in two minutes. He went and returned with his pretended sister, who asked her to step in but one minute, and she would wait upon her in the coach. The poor lady foolishly followed her into the house, when instantly the sister vanished, and a tawny fellow in a black coat and a black wig appeared. 'Madam, you are come in good time: the doctor was just a-going.' 'The doctor!' says she, horridly frightened, fearing it was a madhouse; 'what has the doctor to do with me?' 'To marry you to that gentleman; the doctor has waited for you these three hours, and will be paid by you or that gentleman before you go.' 'That gentleman,' says she, recovering herself, 'is worthy a better fortune than mine,' and begged hard to be gone. But Doctor Wryneck swore she should be married, or if she would not he would still have his fee, and register the marriage from that night. The lady finding she could not escape without money or a pledge, told them she liked the gentleman so well she would certainly meet him to-morrow night, and gave them a ring as a pledge, 'which,' says she, 'was my mother's gift on her deathbed, enjoining that, if ever I married, it should be my wedding-ring.' By which cunning contrivance she was delivered from the black doctor and his tawny crew."

The lady who gives this account of the hazardous adventure of her friend was curious to see something of these Fleet marriages. "So," she says, "some time after this I went with this lady and her brother, in a coach, to Ludgate-hill in the daytime, to see the manner of their

picking up people to be married. As soon as our coach stopped near Fleet-bridge, up comes one of the myrmidons. 'Madam,' says he, 'you want a parson?' 'Who are you?' says I. 'I am the clerk and registrar of the Fleet.' 'Show me the chapel.' At which comes a second, desiring me to go along with him. Says he, 'That fellow will carry you to a puddling alehouse.' Says a third, 'Go with me—he will carry you to a brandy-shop.' In the interim comes the doctor: 'Madam,' says he, 'I'll do your job for you presently.' 'Well, gentlemen,' says I, 'since you can't agree, and I can't be married quietly, I'll put it off till another time;' so drove away."

The open manner in which these things were done, as well as the competition existing among the several parsons, are shown in the following advertisement, of which scores of a similar kind appeared in the newspapers:

"Marriages with a license, certificate, and a crown stamp, at a guinea, at the new chapel, next door to the china-shop, near Fleet-bridge, London, by a regular-bred clergyman, and not by a Fleet parson, as is intimated in the public papers; and, that the town may be freed of mistakes, no clergyman, being a prisoner in the rules of the Fleet, dare marry, and, to obviate all doubts, the chapel is not in the verge of the Fleet, but kept by a gentleman who was lately chaplain on board one of his Majesty's men-of-war, and likewise who had gloriously distinguished himself in defence of his king and country, and is above committing those little mean actions that some men impose on people, being determined to have everything conducted with the utmost decency and regularity, such as shall all be supported in law and equity."

This worthy, while he indignantly repels the insinuation that he was a Fleet parson, was, by his own confession at least, a chaplain *in the fleet*.

Smollett, in his continuation of Hume's History, confirms all that has been said of the frightful evils attendant upon the impunity enjoyed by these Fleet parsons. He even goes further in his deprecation of them and their doings:

“There was a band of profligate miscreants, the refuse of the clergy, dead to every sentiment of virtue, abandoned to all sense of decency and decorum, for the most part prisoners for debt or delinquency, and, indeed the very outcasts of human society, who hovered about the verge of the Fleet prison, to intercept customers, plying like porters for employment, and performed the ceremony of marriage, without license or question, in cellars, garrets, or alehouses, to the scandal of religion and the disgrace of that order which they professed. The ease with which this ecclesiastical sanction was obtained, and the vicious disposition of those wretches, open to the practices of fraud and corruption, were productive of polygamy, indigence, conjugal infidelity, prostitution, and every curse that could embitter the married state.”

Some idea may be formed of the magnitude of this evil, when we state that, from October, 1704, to February, 1705, the number of these marriages was 2594, or nearly at the rate of 8000 per annum! But we think we have adduced sufficient evidence to convince the reader that it was full time that a stop was put to these proceedings by the Marriage Act, which rendered it punishable by death to give a false certificate or make a false registry.

Another curious feature connected with marriage in the last century, was the reporting of the dower of the lady



in the announcement of the marriage. The following examples from the *London Magazine* of September, 1735, will serve to show that, in some instances, the gentleman's portion was stated:

“Morgan, William, of Denbigh, in North Wales, Esq., to Miss Craddock, sole daughter of John Craddock, of Chester, Esq., an 8000*l.* fortune.

“Sir Edward Dering, of Surrenden-Dering in Kent, to Mrs. Mompesson, a young widow lady of 30,000*l.* fortune.

“Mr. William Pearce, an eminent surgeon, of Bricklayers' Hall, in Leadenhall-street, to Mrs. Mary Hardy, of Mile-end, a 10,000*l.* fortune.

“Mr. Murray, nephew of Mr. Murray, the face painter, who died about two months since, and left him upwards of 40000*l.*, to Miss Turner, daughter of Mrs. Turner, of Gloucester-street,” &c. &c. &c.

There was little in the Funeral Customs of the last century that was different to that of its successor. The practice of persons of wealth “lying in state” was more general; and even the bodies of wealthy merchants and tradesmen were sometimes laid out amidst black velvet hangings, with wax candles beside the coffins, and the doors of their houses thrown open, for the public and their neighbours to come and look at them. The mournful pageantry of lying in state was kept up for several days after the death, and the funeral was generally conducted by torchlight, the chamber of death remaining religiously closed and locked in many instances for years, till, as in the case of Sir Roger de Coverley, all the best rooms were shut up in honour of departed ancestors. As soon as convenient after the death, “searchers” were employed to examine the body and see that there were no

marks of foul play, and, if the deceased were a female, these were generally a parcel of gin-drinking old women, appointed by the parish officers, but performing their duties very inefficiently and indecorously, and their fees appear to have ranged from half-a-crown to seven-and-sixpence; and, after them, came the "plumper," "whose business," says the *Oxford and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany* of September, 1750, "is to bedizen the dead body, and make what the ladies call 'a charming corpse.'"

We have before us an undertaker's bill of a date as late as September, 1780, for the funeral of a person of the middle class, which amounts to 61*l.* odd, and contains the following items:

|   | £  | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|----|
| To 32 men, for carrying of ye lights at 2s. 6d. . . . .                   | 4  | 0  | 0  |
| To 32 branches for ditto, 2s. each . . . . .                              | 0  | 5  | 4* |
| To 68 lbs. of wax candles, for ditto, at 3s. per lb. . . . .              | 10 | 4  | 0  |
| To 2 beadles attending ye corps, with silk dressings and gowns<br>&c. &c. | 1  | 10 | 0  |

The practice of burying by torchlight, then, had thus long survived Pope's severe satire:

When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend  
The wretch, who living, saved a candle's end.

Every mourner at a funeral, as may be observed in the last scene of Hogarth's "Harlot's Progress," was provided with a branch of rosemary, probably at first adopted as a precaution against contagion, but it afterwards came to be considered a grave breach of decorum to appear at a funeral without one of these sprigs.

The same inquisitiveness on the part of the public, prying into private affairs, or the same ostentation on the part of individuals which led to their making a parade of

\* So charged in the original.

their newly-acquired wealth, and originated the practice of reporting the dowry which an eligible marriage brought into a family, may have urged the publication of all details of the fortunes left behind, in the obituaries inserted in the magazines and newspapers. Thus the *London Magazine* of October, 1735, gives a list of deaths, among which are:

“At Littlecot, in the county of Wilts, Francis Popham, Esq., a gentleman of 7000*l.* fortune.

“Sir John Tash, Knt., Alderman of Walbrook Ward, in the sixty-first year of his age, reputed worth 200,000*l.*,” &c. &c.

Where is there a greater moral lesson taught than in this union of pageantry, pomp, empty show, and ostentation, with the leveller of all distinctions, Death!



## CHAPTER V.

## PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS, SPORTS, AND AMUSEMENTS.

IN the chapter devoted to fashion and fashionable customs, we have stated that Vauxhall and Ranelagh were places of resort for "the quality" and higher ranks of citizens; the popular rendezvous of the theatre and the coffee-house will be left for separate chapters, and the out-of-door amusements and entertainments of the period claim the present one to themselves. Vauxhall, the "Spring Garden" of Sir Roger de Coverley, had a formidable competitor in Ranelagh, as well as minor ones in Cupar's Gardens, Marylebone Gardens, and a host of imitators.

Ranelagh was situated at Chelsea, near the Royal College. The principal entertainments, as at Vauxhall, were vocal and instrumental music and fireworks. Sometimes vaulters, jugglers, equestrians, &c., performed their feats and wonders. Sometimes a ballet was introduced, and often a masquerade. The gardens, also, were frequently used for public dinners, suppers, and breakfasts; but the general entertainments were music, singing, and dancing. In the former department, the illustrious Dr. Arne, the brother of Mrs. Cibber, and composer of Addison's "Rosamond," Fielding's "Tom Thumb," Milton's "Comus," "Artaxerxes," and a number of operas, was once engaged

here in the choral and instrumental arrangements; but the principal purpose of fashionable visitors was less to see and hear than to be seen and noticed—to promenade the “genteel” walks, hear a few staves of some signor’s song, gaze at the company, and wind up the evening with an assignation.

The music was truly enchanting,  
Right glad was I when I came near it;  
But in fashion I found I was wanting—  
’Twas the fashion to walk and not hear it.

So says Bloomfield in his visit to Ranelagh.

What wonders were there to be found  
That a clown might enjoy or disdain!  
First we traced the gay ring all around,  
Ay, and—then we went round it again.  
Fair maids who at home in their haste  
Had left all clothing else but a train,  
Swept the floor clean as slowly they paced,  
And then—walked round and swept it again.

Such was the insipid routine of the “better sort” of visitors; but “vulgar people,” to wit, London tradesmen and country cousins, who were bent upon having the full value of their shillings and half-crowns, were waiting at the gates an hour before the time of opening, listened to the music, rapturously encored every song, good or bad, for the mere sake of “having it over again,” gazed at the waterworks, and were heartily delighted with the fireworks, traversed the gardens from end to end, admired the stupendous rotunda, and then, unlike their fashionable companions, instead of repairing to a box to sip sour wine and demolish meagre sandwiches, quitted the gardens no sooner than they were obliged, and adjourned to a neighbouring tavern to discuss a hearty supper.

“Cupar’s gay Groves” were on the present site of the

church in Waterloo-road, and besides these, there were Marylebone Gardens (closed in 1777-8), Bagnigge Wells, Islington Spa, Lambeth Wells, and a number of similar places for out-of-door recreations. They were all, of course, more or less, the resorts of loose characters of both sexes, who made them a species of exchange for the transaction of their business.

Then there was Bellsizes, an ancient mansion, with park and extensive grounds, in the Hampstead-road. In 1720, the advertisement of this place of entertainment announced that the park, wilderness, and gardens were "wonderfully improved, and filled with a variety of birds, which compose a most melodious and delightful harmony. Every morning at seven o'clock the music begins to play, and continues the whole day through, and any persons inclined to walk and divert themselves in the morning, may as cheaply breakfast there on tea or coffee as in their own chambers."

Coaches ran from Hampstead to Bellsizes, carrying passengers to the gardens for sixpence; but the terrors of the times are graphically expressed in the following pithy notice:

"For the security of the guests, there are twelve stout fellows, completely armed, to patrol betwixt London and Bellsizes, to prevent the insults of highwaymen and foot-pads which may infest the roads."

This kind of notice was nothing unusual. The proprietor of Marylebone Gardens, in 1746, when their attractions were at their highest, had a guard of soldiers to protect the visitors from and to London; and, in 1764, Thomas Lowe, who was then proprietor, was induced to offer ten guineas reward for the apprehension of any highwayman on the way to the gardens, as the perils of the



road (the gardens were on the site of the Regent's Park) had deterred many from going. But the only fear of robbery was not to be confined to the road—gambling had been introduced at all these places, especially at Marylebone Gardens, where, in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's day, "some dukes bowl'd time away," and many a man lost more in an evening's play at the Gardens than he would have run any danger of being robbed of outside." Akin to the above announcement, is that contained in an advertisement of Ranelagh Gardens, in 1754—"A strong guard is stationed upon the roads." So that the danger which these "guards" were to provide against was not confined to any particular locality. But all this belongs to another subject; let us return to Bellsize.

So popular did this place of resort become (as its original plan deserved), that the Prince and Princess of Wales visited it and dined there; but the introduction of gambling and intrigue compromised its character, and led to its final closing.

The entertainment of the lower class was not unprovided for—they had their White Conduit House, Copenhagen House, Peerless Pool, and Hornsey Wood House, in the northern suburbs, and the Dog and Duck on the site of New Bethlehem, where *al-fresco* amusements and manly and healthy sports could be enjoyed, and where they might ramble on the green sward after the business of the day, or sit upon the rustic benches, and enjoy a refreshing glass of "purl" or "twopenny," with a rural prospect of grassy fields before them, inhaling with each draught fresh and fragrant air, instead of the vice which they now drink in with their vile and spurious liquors at the penny theatre, the gin palace, or the "saloon" concert.

Islington, Chelsea, and Stepney, then quite "the coun-

try," were also much frequented by the middle and lower classes on Sundays and holidays, but these were as dangerous in the return home at night as Hampstead; and, at the Angel, at Islington, a bell used to be rung at intervals, to collect the visitors who were journeying cityward, in order that they might start in a body, and afford each other mutual protection against footpads and robbers.

In the *Daily Advertiser*, of May 6th, 1745, we meet with an advertisement of a nondescript house of entertainment, which seems to have been so popular as to excite competition:

"This is to give notice to all ladies and gentlemen, at Spencer's Original Breakfasting Hut, between Sir Hugh Middleton's Head and Saint John-street Road, by the New River side, fronting Sadler's Wells, may be had, every morning, except Sundays, fine tea, sugar, bread, butter, and milk, at 4d. per head: coffee at 3d. a dish. And in the afternoon, tea, sugar, and milk, at 3d. per head, with good attendance. Coaches may come up to the farthest garden door, next to the bridge in Saint John-street Road, near Sadler's Wells gate. Note.—Ladies, &c. are desired to take notice that there is another person set up in opposition to me the next door, which is a brick house, and faces the little gate by the Sir Hugh Middleton's, and therefore mistaken for mine; but mine is the little boarded place by the river-side, and my back-door faces the same as usual, for—

"I am not dead, I am not gone,  
Nor liquors do I sell,  
But as at first I still go on,  
Ladies, to use you well.  
No passage to my hut I have,  
The river runs before,  
Therefore your care I humbly crave,  
Pray don't mistake my door.

"Yours to serve, S. SPENCER."

Masquerades were in great favour during the last century, and, like the other follies of fashion, fell under the lash of Hogarth, who satirises the perverted taste of the town, which neglected Shakspeare and Jonson for such absurdities, in his masquerades at Burlington-gate. But, in the time of the "Spectator," the rage for these entertainments seems to have been equally warm; and the contradictions and anomalies, arising out of want of judgment, taste, or historical knowledge of the costumiers and maskers is heartily laughed at.

Cock-fighting, boxing, and bull-baiting, were among the fashionable sports of the period. The former, as illustrated by Hogarth, was patronised by men of station, and was, in fact, ranked essentially among the more aristocratic amusements. "I am just got home," writes the Right Honourable Richard Rigby to George Selwyn (March 12th, 1745), "from a cock-match, where I have won 40*l.* in ready money;" and, on the same day, "Yesterday I spent good part of the day with my Lord Coke at a cock-match." The King of Denmark, a few years later, on his visiting this country, was taken to see a cock-fight. Boxing, too, was aristocratic, amphitheatres for its display being regularly advertised in the public papers, and, in 1723, so royally was it favoured, that the king ordered a ring to be marked out in Hyde Park, about five hundred yards from Grosvenor-gate, and properly fenced in; whilst, in the French theatre, in the Haymarket, those renowned champions, Figg and Sparkes, fought for a prize on December 3rd, 1731.

The most revolting and disgusting spectacles of this kind were prize-fights, in which women were the competitors for the stakes, and, half-naked, battered and bruised each other, without cause or provocation, to the heart's delight of a "respectable" circle of beholders! Under



date June 22nd, 1768, we read: "Wednesday last, two women fought for a new chemise, valued at half a guinea, in the Spa-fields, near Islington. The battle was won by a woman called 'Bruising Peg,' who beat her antagonist in a terrible manner."

In 1722, we find the following:

f "CHALLENGE.—I, Elizabeth Wilkinson, of Clerkenwell, having had some words with Hannah Hyfield, and requiring satisfaction, do invite her to meet me upon the stage, and box me for three guineas; each woman holding half-a-crown in each hand, and the first woman that drops the money to lose the battle."

4 "ANSWER.—I, Hannah Hyfield, of Newgate Market, hearing of the resoluteness of Elizabeth Wilkinson, will not fail, *God willing*, to give her more blows than words, desiring home blows, and from her no favour; she may expect a good thumping."

The half-crowns were to be held to prevent the combatants resorting to the more natural (!) weapons of their sex—the nails!

Stoke Newington seems to have produced many boxers—probably from among the gipsy tribe, who then frequented the "Green Lanes" about that picturesque little village:

"At Mr. Stokes' Amphitheatre in Islington Road, this present Monday, being the 7 of October, will be a complete Boxing Match by the two following Championesses:—Whereas I, Ann Field, of Stoke Newington, ass-driver, well known for my abilities, in boxing in my own defence wherever it happened in my way, having been affronted by Mrs. Stokes, styled the European Championess, do fairly invite her to a trial of her best skill in Boxing for 10 pounds, fair rise and fall; and question not but to give her such proofs of my judgment that shall oblige her to

acknowledge me Championess of the Stage, to the satisfaction of all my friends."

"I, Elizabeth Stokes, of the City of London, have not fought in this way since I fought the famous boxing-woman of Billingsgate 29 minutes, and gained a complete victory (which is six years ago); but as the famous Stoke Newington ass-woman dares me to fight her for the 10 pounds, I do assure her I will not fail meeting her for the said sum, and doubt not that the blows which I shall present her with will be more difficult for her to digest than any she ever gave her asses. *Note*.—A man known by the name of Rugged and Tuff, challenges the best man of Stoke Newington to fight him for one guinea to what sum they please to venture. *N.B.*—Attendance will be given at one, and the encounter to begin at four precisely. There will be the diversion of Cudgel-playing as usual."—*Daily Post, July 7th, 1728.*

The public papers teemed with challenges from boxers, but in a different style from those now so concisely stated in our sporting prints. Here is an advertisement, in which the gauntlet is thrown down with a mighty flourish of trumpets:

"Whereas I, William Willis, commonly called by the name of the 'Fighting Quaker,' have fought Mr. Smallwood, about twelve months since, and held him the tightest to it, and bruised and battered more than any one he ever encountered, though I had the misfortune to be beat by an accidental fall; the said Smallwood, flushed with the success blind Fortune then gave him, and the weak attempts of a few vain Irishmen and boys, that have of late fought him for a minute or two, makes him think himself unconquerable, to convince him of the falsity of which, I invite him to fight me for 100*l.*, at the time and place above mentioned, when I doubt not I shall prove

the truth of what I have asserted, by pegs, darts, hard blows, falls, and cross-buttocks."

The refined taste for bear and bull-baiting was gratified by two rival establishments, the King's Bear-garden, which existed till 1754, at Hockley-in-the-Hole, on the site of the present Brickhill and Ray-streets, Clerkenwell, and the New Bear-garden at Marylebone. There were also arenas for boxing, fencing, wrestling, and dog-fighting; but the legitimate sport of the place was such as is announced in the following advertisement, selected from many of a similar nature, dated 1730: "At his Majesty's Bear-garden, at Hockley-in-the-Hole, Monday, 14th of September, 1730, a mad bull to be dressed up with fireworks and turned loose in the game place. Likewise a dog to be dressed up with fireworks over him, and turned loose with the man in the ground. Also a bear to be let loose at the same time, and a cat to be tied to the bull's tail. Note.—The doors will be opened at four, as the sports begin at five exactly, because the diversion will last long, and the days grow short."

Here is the same glorious "sport" at another arena; we copy a handbill of the period: "This is to give notice, that to-morrow, for a day's diversion, at Mr. Stokes's amphitheatre, a mad bull dressed up with fireworks will be baited. Also cudgel-playing for a silver cup, and wrestling for a pair of buckskin breeches. September 3rd, 1729. Gallery seats, 2s. 6d., 2s., 1s. 6d., and 1s."

We could afford a laugh at the fanciful customs of our grandfathers, but we must not laugh now. This is no folly of the dandy—it is the brutality of the savage.

The same den at Hockley-in-the-Hole was the scene of different though less hateful sports—broadsword and cudgelling. Challenges frequently appeared in the papers from one "master of the noble science of defence" (so



they styled themselves) to another, to "fight with back-sword, sword and dagger, sword and buckler, single falchion, case of falchions, quarterstaff and singlestick; he that gives the most cuts to have the most money." Very frightful gashes and stabs were given and received at these gladiatorial exhibitions, yet they were respectably attended, and in some instances women took a part in them.

How coolly does Mr. Button talk of "cutting down" his antagonists:

"A *Tryal of Skill* to be performed at His Majesty's Bear Garden in Hockley-in-the-Hole, on Thursday next, being the 9th instant, betwixt these following masters:—Edmund Button, master of the noble science of defence, *who hath lately cut down* Mr. Hasgit and the Champion of the West, *and 4 besides*, and James Harris, an Herefordshire man, master of the noble science of defence, who has fought 98 prizes and never was worsted, to exercise the usual weapons, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon precisely."—*Postman*, July 4, 1701.

Cudgelling was not quite extinct, but we find it in strange company; here is a medley:

"On Wednesday the 13th, at Windsor, a piece of plate is to be fought for at cudgels, by ten men on a side, from Berkshire and Middlesex. The next day a hat and feather to be fought for by ten men on a side from the counties aforesaid. Ten bargemen are to eat ten quarts of hasty pudding, well buttered, but infernally hot; he that has done first to have a silver spoon of ten shillings value, and the second five shillings. And as they have anciently had the title of the Merry Wives of Windsor, six old women belonging to Windsor town challenge any six old women in the universe (we need not, however, go farther than our own country) to outscold them; the best in

three heats to have a suit of head cloths, and (what old women generally want) a pair of nutcrackers.”—*Read's Journal, September 9th, 1721.*

Another pastime in which women were the actors—still indecorous, but more ludicrous than painful—was the smock-racing in Pall Mall, which appears to have been kept up as late as 1733. If this appear strange, what  
 ✕ will the reader say of football being played in the Strand? Yet this favourite sport *was* carried on in that thoroughfare, far into the eighteenth century, and must have been rather awkward for passengers who were taking a sober stroll along the street; for Gay says, in his “Art of Walking the Streets”—

The 'prentice quits his shop to join the crew,  
 Increasing crowds the flying game pursue.

The football would give no light blow to the skin which was protected only by “stockings of amber-coloured silk,” and why a public street should have been selected for the game, when fields were close at hand—even to the Strand—we do not find explained; nor why cricket was played, at the same time, “by the 'prentices in the porches of Covent-garden.”

Bowling-allies were also kept up in London, and pretty well attended. We give the copies of two handbills announcing the game of bowls:

“On Thursday next, being the 13th of March, 1718, the bowling-greens will be opened at the Prospect House, Islington, where there will be accommodation for all gentlemen bowlers.”

“*May, 1757.*—To be bowled for on Monday next, at the Red Cow, in Saint George's Fields, a pair of silver buckles, value fourteen shillings, at five pins, each pin a yard apart. He that brings most pins at three bowls has

the buckles, if the money is in ; if not, the money each man has put in. Three bowls for sixpence, and a pint of beer out of it for the good of the house."

The archers of Finsbury contrived long to preserve their ground amidst the spread of bricks and mortar, levelling hedges, filling up ditches, and replacing their marks, in a desperate encounter with innovation and growing enterprise, until 1786, when they were beaten from their fields, which soon became lines of streets and courts. But archery had been on the wane since the eighteenth century began.

The fox-hunting season began much earlier than it does now, for does not Sir Andrew Freeport say to Sir Roger de Coverley, "the country gentlemen passed like a blast over the fields of corn?" No wonder if farmers grumbled *then*; no wonder that they got an Act of Parliament passed early in the reign of George III., prohibiting fox-hunting till after harvest. X

The heading of the present chapter will cover, in its application, a subject nearly akin to it, which we shall now proceed to glance at—Public Rejoicings, Fasts, and Festivals.

Zealous Protestants as were our grandsires, with their riots of '80, and "No Popery," they still followed the Popish practice of observing saints' days, and many of the usual festivals of the Romish Church. Business was in a great measure suspended, and places of worship opened on the anniversaries of any of the saints. This day was dedicated to St. Jude—that was sacred to St. Matthew; to-day was the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul—another the Fast of Shrove Tuesday; and most of them, feasts and fasts, saints' days and sinners' days, were *holy-days*.

And then, besides these spiritual festivals, there were celebrations of worldly and profane events: there was the



Martyrdom of King Charles, the Restoration of his son, the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot—these, too, were holidays.

So numerous and frequent were they, in fact, that in 1774, it was reckoned that the public offices were closed for holidays at least the eighth part of the year.

Then there was the king's birthday—and the queen's—and the birthdays of their numerous progeny. Then came the days of thanksgiving, when the king had recovered from a sickness, or the queen been delivered of a child. Thanks were returned for every victory during the wars that were the public business of the last century—in other words, whenever we had slaughtered some thousands of soldiers, or sent a man-of-war to the bottom of the ocean, such matters were acknowledged by a general thanksgiving. Not content with this, we testified our joy at every victory by other means; guns boomed the glorious intelligence from the Tower wharf—flags streamed from the masts of ships—the liberated schoolboy shouted the songs which had been written for the occasion, with a loud voice and cheerful face—“*Gazettes* extraordinary” appeared in rapid succession, and were eagerly devoured by the politicians of the coffee-houses—shops were closed, and churches opened. But in the evening was seen the grand climax of the people's joy, when the streets were crowded with noisy thousands, all pouring anxiously to the west-end of the town to see “the general illumination.” A stranger would have imagined that every inhabitant, rich and poor, participated heartily in the national rejoicing, for every house exhibited its devices of many-coloured lamps, and rows of lighted candles. But there was another powerful and active agent at work to promote this unanimity of purpose, and that was a terror of the mob, who had a strong propensity for breaking the

windows of such refractory householders as refused to "light up" and thus testify their patriotism on so brilliant an occasion. Let us see how an unfortunate Quaker was served, who seemed to have attached no more value to his window-panes than to the event which was to be commemorated. Here is an illumination scene of 1759, as described in the *Annual Register* of that year:

"June 2.—The populace assaulted the house of an eminent woollen-draper in Cornhill, one of the people called Quakers. They pulled up the pavements, and split the window-shutters of his shop with large stones; the smaller pebbles were flung up as high as the third story, the windows of which are much damaged—in the second story not so much as one pane of glass has escaped. The windows of the first story were not touched, being fenced with strong shutters on the outside. The reason of the mob's resentment was his not illuminating his house like the rest of his neighbours."

Very differently did they show their admiration of any grand device or attractive transparency, and long and loud were the cheers which the mob sent forth to greet the ears of those who, in the exuberance of their loyalty, had been thoughtless of expense, and whose houses presented a grand display of lights.

The illuminations on the acquittal of Admiral Keppel by the court-martial by which he was tried in February, 1779, extended throughout the country. We read of hackney-coaches plying through London, illuminated with lanterns—of a grand illumination of the Monument—of a fishwoman in Piccadilly, who stuck forty-five candles among her sprats, and was rewarded by a collection of fifty shillings among the mob—of bonfires at many noblemen's seats in the country; in short, the rejoicing

was general and extravagant. To equal excess did the indignation of the mob extend among the admiral's accusers. A mob commenced pulling down the house of Sir Hugh Palliser, in Westminster; another mob broke into the house of Lord Sandwich, and demolished the furniture, emptying it through the windows into the street; Lord North's windows were broken; and the effigies of Lord Hood and Palliser burned on Tower-hill and at the Royal Exchange.

The illumination of houses as a symbol of satisfaction and joy undoubtedly survived in the present century; but the *system* of illumination, of which we have been speaking, in its general observance and frequent occurrence, as undoubtedly belonged to the last.

We have spoken of smock-races in Pall-mall, football in the Strand, and cricket-playing in Covent-garden, but what will our readers think of bonfires in Fleet-street? Yet on the 5th of November, the popular anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, "Guys" were duly gibbeted and burned in the public thoroughfares; and Lord Campbell, in his "Lives of the Lords Chief Justices," relates how, in 1753, Sir Dudley Ryder, when Attorney-General, was stopped in Fleet-street, as he was returning in a coach to his house in Chancery-lane, from the trial of William Owen for a libel on the House of Commons, by a tumultuous mob, who were celebrating the verdict of acquittal over a huge bonfire; and who, without recognising in him the counsel for the Crown, demanded money to drink the health of the jury.

Hogarth gives us one of these scenes beside Temple Bar, where two or three distinct fires may be seen; while a figure in the foreground is rolling a tar-barrel to add to the pile which is to consume the effigy suspended from the gallows above it.



## CHAPTER VI.

## STREET FAIRS.

STREET FAIRS have passed away, but not without leaving a record behind; and here, in our museum, beside the defunct public sports and amusements, will we devote a chapter to their memory—for May, Southwark, and Bartholomew Fairs must not be forgotten among the curiosities of the eighteenth century. They were right royally favoured in their time, and we must show them no disrespect. We find Sir Robert Walpole, when prime minister, visiting Bartholomew Fair; but, in 1740, Frederick Prince of Wales attended it with a troop of yeomen of the guard with lighted flambeaux. An anecdote is told of Garrick's visit to the fair, when we should opine that David's vanity must have sustained a little mortification. On tendering his money at the booth where "drolls" were exhibited, the cashier, recognising his features, rejected the proffered fee, saying, with admirable taste, "Sir, we never take money of *one another*."

The countenance of royalty encouraged exhibitions and entertainments of a superior order at these fairs. The performers from the Theatres Royal were not above appearing at Smithfield, Southwark, and May Fairs. In 1715, Dawks's *News Letter*, in announcing the prepara-

tions for Bartholomew Fair, says: "There is one great booth erected *for the king's players* in the middle of Smithfield. The booth is the longest that was ever built."

Lee and Harper attended Bartholomew and Southwark Fairs; and we find Pinkethman's company both at Southwark and May Fairs:

"Several constables visited Pinkethman's booth in Southwark Fair, and apprehended Pinkethman, with others of his company, just as they had concluded a play in the presence of near *a hundred and fifty noblemen and gentlemen seated on the stage*. They were soon liberated on making it appear that they were the king's servants."—*September 13, 1717.*

"Advices from the upper end of Piccadilly say that May Fair is utterly abolished; and we hear Mr. Pinkethman has removed his ingenious company of strollers to Greenwich."—*Tatler, April 18, 1709.*

At a still later period we glean from the following hand-bills that the leading actors still had booths at these fairs:

"Bartholomew and Southwark Fairs, 1733:

"At Cibber, Griffin, Bullock, and Hallam's booths—'Tamerlane,' intermixed with 'The Miser.'

"At Lee and Harper's booth—'The True and Ancient History of Bateman; or, The Unhappy Marriage,' with the comical humours of *Sparrow, Pumpkin, and Slicer*; and the diverting scene of 'The Midwife and Gossips at a Labour.'

"At Lee and Harper's booth—'Jephthah's Rash Vow; or, The Virgin Sacrifice,' with the comical humours of *Captain Bluster* and his man *Diddimo*. *Jephthah, Hulett; Captain Bluster, Harper.*

“At Fielding and Hippisley’s booth—‘Love and Jealousy; or, The Downfal of Alexander the Great;’ with ‘A Cure for Covetousness.’ Lovell, Mrs. Pritchard.

“At Miller, Mills, and Oates’s booth—‘Jane Shore,’ with the comical humours of *Sir Anthony Noodle* and his man *Weazle*,” &c., &c.

May Fair, in 1701, lasted sixteen days, and seems to have struggled on against a presentment of the grand jury of Westminster in 1708, and the sharp surveillance of the grand jury of Middlesex in 1744, until the year 1756; but it is now only a memory and a name, the ground being occupied by the mansions of the nobility instead of the booths of mountebanks.

Bartholomew’s fourteen-days’ fair continued, however, to a much later period, and, in its decline, was familiar to the present generation.

Hogarth has left us a representation of Southwark Fair, whence we may learn what were the general amusements at these fairs. There are the theatres, conjurors, jugglers, rope-dancers, raree-shows, dancing-dolls, and gingerbread-stalls of modern fairs; but there were other sports which have long been unknown to us. Of these, “ducking” was very attractive. Here is a hand-bill announcing a ducking-match, which will render a description of the sport unnecessary:

“At May Fair Ducking-Pond, on Monday next, the 27th June (1748), Mr. Hootton’s dog, Nero (with hardly a tooth in his head to hold a duck, but well known by his goodness to all that have seen him hunt), hunts six ducks for a guinea against the bitch called the Flying Spaniel, from the ducking-pond on the other side of the water, who has beaten all she has hunted against excepting Mr. Hootton’s Goodblood. To begin at two o’clock.



Mr. Hootton begs his customers won't take it amiss to pay twopence admittance at the gate, and take a ticket which will be allowed as cash in their reckoning. None are admitted without a ticket, that such as are not liked may be kept out. *Note*—Right Lincoln Ale."

These ducking-matches were not confined to fairs, for we find the following advertisement in the *Postman* of August the 7th, 1707:

"A new ducking-pond, to be opened on Monday next, at Limehouse, being the 11th of August; when four dogs are to play for four pounds, and a lamb to be roasted whole, to be given away to all gentlemen sportsmen. To begin at ten o'clock in the morning."

Another exhibition at these fairs was posturising. No distortion of the body was too grotesque or too unnatural—no deformity of the body too difficult to imitate. The posture-masters might be suspected of having neither bones nor muscles, so lissom was their whole frame. Now the toe was in the mouth—now at the back of the head; the legs were turned contrary ways, or the back of the head where the face should be. One of these worthies is thus announced by a hand-bill in 1711:

"From the Duke of Marlborough's Head, in Fleet-street, during the fair, is to be seen the famous posture-master, who far exceeds Clarke and Higgins. He twists his body into all deformed shapes, makes his hip and shoulder bones meet together, lays his head upon the ground, and turns his body round twice or thrice without stirring his head from the place."

In 1736, we find by the papers that "an ass-race attracted vast crowds to May Fair;" but at an earlier period, there appears to have been some business transacted there, as well as sports and pastimes. The following

advertisement appeared in the London newspapers of April the 27th, 1700:

"In Brookfield Market-place, at the east corner of Hyde Park, is a fair to be kept for the space of sixteen days, beginning with the 1st of May; the first three days for live cattle and leather, with the same entertainments as at Bartholomew Fair; where there are shops to be let, ready built, for all manner of tradesmen that usually keep fairs. And so to continue yearly at the same place."

"Merrie Islington" presented all the appearance of a fair throughout the year; it might, in fact, be said to be a complete "*fair-y* land." There were booths for the exhibition of horsemanship, jugglers, &c.; shows for the performances of drolls, interludes, and pantomimes; caravans of wild beasts; arenas for fighting, wrestling, and cudgelling. Of these, the most celebrated were the booths at the "Three Hats," Dobney's Jubilee Gardens, the Pantheon in Spa-fields, and Stokes's Amphitheatre. The following is a hand-bill issued from the latter:

"At Mr. Stokes's Amphitheatre, Islington-road, on Monday, 24th June, 1733, I, John Seale, citizen of London, give this invitation to the celebrated Hibernian hero, Mr. Robert Barker, to exert his utmost abilities with me; and I, Robert Barker, accept this invitation; and, if my antagonist's courage equal his menaces, glorious will be my conquest. Attendance at two. The masters mount at five. *Vivant Rex et Regina!*"

But the glories of Islington are faded—its waste ground is covered. Spa-fields are fields no longer; and, instead of having *Moorfields*, we have *fewer* fields, and not a spare acre for a booth to be pitched upon. The street fairs of London are things that are gone.

## CHAPTER VII.

## TRADE AND COMMERCE.

ALTHOUGH we have given the general text of "Trade and Commerce" to the present chapter, it must not be supposed that we are going to enter into an elaborate history or essay on finance, the currency, or the circulating medium, but only to introduce one or two curiosities which were features connected with the mercantile and commercial world of the last century.

The merchants congregated on 'Change as at present; and Addison's description of "full 'Change" in 1709 might serve for an account of it in 1849; they also resorted to coffee-houses, as they do now, but they were, as well as the present, Garraway's, frequented by the better class of merchants and citizens—Robins's, for foreign bankers and ambassadors—and Jonathan's, for stock-brokers; but these will be spoken of, among the tribe of coffee-houses, in another chapter.

These "merchant princes" (and well were they worthy of the title) at that time lived in the centre of their business—they had not thought of the West-end—and their mansions were close to their counting-houses, in Spital-square, Leadenhall-street, Fenchurch-street, Broad-street, and Austin-friars, Throgmorton-street, Bishopsgate-



street, with Crosby-square, and Great Saint Helen's, Billiter-street, Coleman-street, Basinghall-street, and (especially the rich Jew merchants) the streets forming the district of Goodman's-fields; and, in many of these old palaces of trade, now let out in chambers and counting-houses, the wide and sweeping staircase, carved oaken balustrades, massive panelling, richly-corniced ceilings, costly sculptured mantelpieces, large and thick window-sashes, and heavy doors, tell us of their former splendour. Many a fair, small foot has pressed the now ink-stained floor in the stately minuet or lively cotillon—many a sumptuous entertainment has been spread where the desks and stools now stand—many an emblazoned carriage has set down its passengers at the portals on which a string of names is now painted—and many a time and oft have the running footmen and linkbearers who accompanied it thrust their links into the giant extinguishers which, perchance, yet linger, rusty and battered, upon the columns of the gate.

The safe arrival of a convoy from the East or West Indies—the capture of a fleet of merchantmen by the enemy—the rise or fall of South Sea Stock or India Bonds were added to the subjects which form the conversation on 'Change now-a-days, but, in other respects, the merchant of the eighteenth century and his pursuits were almost the same as they are now.

Not so, however, the tradesman. He was an inveterate politician and frequenter of the coffee-house. A publication called the *Dutch Prophet*, issued early in the century, gives us the following notion of a tradesman's life in London at that time, in a kind of prospective diary of a day:—"Wednesday: Several shopkeepers near St. Paul's will rise before six, be upon their knees at chapel a little

after, promise God Almighty to live righteously and soberly before seven, tell fifty lies behind their counters by nine, and spend the rest of the morning over tea and tobacco at Child's Coffee-house."

Almost every tradesman's shop was distinguished by a particular sign, which swung creaking dismally over the footpath as the wind came down the street. Even the bankers exhibited their signs over their doors: Child's was the "Marygold;" Hoare's, the "Leather Bottle" (still represented on their cheques); Snow's, the "Golden Anchor;" Gosling's, the "Three Squirrels;" and Stone and Martin's, the "Grasshopper." The booksellers' favourite signs were the "Bible and Crown" (still distinguishing Messrs. Rivingtons' establishment); the "Homer's Head," the "Shakspeare's Head," the "Three Bibles," the "Angel and Trumpet," the "King's Arms," &c. A mercer's, in New Bond-street, was the "Coventry Cross;" a baker's, in Clare-market, the "Seven Stars;" and a quack medicine-vendor's, in Bride-lane, the "Golden Head." The "Spectator" has given us a disquisition on the rise and abuse of signs, and the anomalies they presented, and almost every one of Hogarth's works show us that they were generally adopted. In 1764 they had increased to such extravagant dimensions, each shopkeeper endeavouring, by enlarging his sign, to make it conspicuous behind his neighbour's, that they not only prevented the free circulation of air in the streets, but, being very heavy, and some of them weighing as much as four or five hundred pounds, they threatened the most fatal accidents to the passengers below. In fact, in 1718, during an unusually high wind, one of these massive iron signs, opposite Bride-lane, in Fleet-street, was blown down, bringing with it the entire front of the house to which it was attached, and

killing four persons and wounding several others. At length, in 1764, the Court of Common Council, taking into consideration the inconvenience and danger to which these huge signs subjected the citizens, ordered that all signs should be fastened against the houses with their faces to front the street, and not left to swing as formerly, so that the streets lost that singular appearance which a long line of swinging sign-boards gave them; and the signs themselves, no longer answering their intended purposes, were gradually discontinued.

The "circulating media" of this period were very different to the currency of the present time. There were, in addition to shillings, sixpences, halfpence, and farthings, —golden guineas, half-guineas, seven-shilling pieces, and quarter-guineas, dollars taken from the Spanish prizes and allowed to circulate, in a scarcity of specie, till re-coined at the Mint, and silver threepences and pence—copper pence not coming into existence till 1797.

Fines and penalties were often computed in marks, and, among similar cases, we find Henry and William Woodfall, the printers, were, on the 25th November, 1774, sentenced by the King's Bench to pay "a fine of two hundred marks," for the publication of a seditious libel.

There were also one-pound notes issued by the Bank of England, and, for a time, copper twopenny-pieces, coined at the Soho (Birmingham) Mint. But the most numerous class of coins taken by the shopkeepers in exchange for their wares, especially in the mining districts and manufacturing towns, were the tradesmen's tokens, or promissory counters, answering for pence, halfpence, and farthings (mostly of copper); and some few twopences and threepences of copper. These were issued from private mints, during a scarcity of copper, and were allowed to pass



current (being, like the brass and other tokens of the previous century, a legal tender), each piece bearing the name and address of the issuer, who was compelled to give a one-pound note for two hundred and forty penny tokens, and always to *honour* them when presented. Some of them were of elegant design and execution, and of elaborate finish. The legends and inscriptions were various, according to the tastes or trades of their respective proprietors; and it is believed that upwards of two thousand varieties were coined between the years 1787 and 1798. Mr. Conder, of Ipswich, published what was considered a complete list of them; but several have been discovered and made known through the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which he has not included in his arrangement. They were principally issued by ironmasters and large manufacturers, employing a number of hands, who found that they at the same time facilitated their payments, and became a useful means of advertising. Such a system of course gave rise to much confusion, and not a little fraud in the forgery or slight variation of the several designs; but it was merely intended to answer a temporary purpose, and was suppressed when there was no longer any need for it.

While on the subject of the coinage, we may mention another fact or two connected with it. The offences of counterfeiting, and of clipping and defacing the coin of the realm, were very frequent in the last century; and both crimes were, with the characteristic severity of the time, punishable with death. Stealthily exporting coin to the Continent during the wars (it being often packed and shipped off in barrels, and, in fact, smuggled over in every conceivable way), also subjected the offender to heavy penalties, but was nevertheless ingeniously, and to

a large extent, practised by the guards of the Dover and other outport mails, some of whom realised a considerable fortune by it; the value of a guinea on the Continent being 23s. 6d., and, at a later period, even reaching to 28s. One of these speculative offenders against the law was detected through the very means by which he had hoped to realise an independence. In his anxiety to make an extensive exportation, he had over-estimated the strength of the mail to such a degree, that, in passing over Shooter's-hill, it gave way beneath its heavy burden, and what appeared to be mail-bags filled with letters, turned out to be sacks of shining guineas. The money was forfeited and carried to the Mint, and the offender arrested and carried to the roundhouse, therein to moralise upon that beautiful old adage, "There is many a slip 'tween the cup and the lip."

We fear the contents of this chapter will be considered somewhat heterogeneous, but we could not find, after much cogitation, a more suitable place for these anecdotes of the coinage than under the head of "Trade and Commerce."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SERVANTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

THE retinue of men of rank in the last century, especially during a journey, was lavish in the extreme; albeit, the necessities of the time demanded a numerous attendance for divers reasons, which will be explained anon, but no members of a travelling gentleman's retinue could have had a more arduous duty to perform, or are more completely extinct as a class, than the running footmen. The duty of these servants, who were in fact *avant-couriers*, was to keep, with no other aid than their own legs, in advance of the cavalcade which was conveying their master from one of his country-seats to another, or perhaps upon a visit to a noble friend; and no doubt it must have given the appearance of great state to his "progress," to be not only attended by an escort of outriders and horsemen, but preceded by two of these agile forerunners, to clear the way and announce the coming of their lord.

Their livery in 1730 was "fine Holland drawers and waistcoats, thread stockings, a blue silk sash, fringed with silver, and a velvet cap, with a large tassel," and they usually carried in their hands "a huge porter's staff, with a silver handle;" or they were "dressed in white with



black jockey-caps, and long staffs in their hands." This kind of attendance was a relic of the state of the preceding century, and in Middleton's "Mad World, my Masters," one of the fraternity is greeted as "Linen Stockings and threescore miles a day;" but the erudite Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham, in his very learned annotations to the "Bride of Lammermoor," testifies to the existence of running footmen at a much later period—"I remember me to have seen one of this tribe clothed in white and bearing a staff, who ran daily before the state-coach of the umquhile John, Earl of Hopeton, father of this earl; Charles, that now is."

But we cannot resist the temptation of transferring to our pages the graphic description of a *cortége* of this kind, from Sir Walter Scott's masterly romance, which called forth the reminiscence we have quoted from worthy Mr. Cleishbotham:

"Two running footmen, dressed in white, with black jockey-caps, and long staffs in their hands, headed the train, and such was their agility that they found no difficulty in keeping the necessary advance which the etiquette of their station required before the carriage and horsemen. Onward they came, at a long swinging trot, arguing unwearied speed in their long-breathed calling." . . . . "Behind these glancing meteors, who footed it as if the avenger of blood had been behind them, came a cloud of dust, raised by riders who preceded, attended, or followed the state carriage of the marquis."

Another picture of this defunct class has been discovered by Mr. Thoms, "in a volume of MS. notes of old plays, in the handwriting of the Rev. George Ashby, Rector of Borrow, in Suffolk, and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge," which dates about 1780, and which

Mr. Thoms has duly deposited in that "Old Curiosity Shop" of literature, *Notes and Queries*:

"The running footmen drank white wine and eggs. One told me, fifty years ago, that they carried some white wine in the large silver ball of their tall cane, or pole, which unscrews; that they could easily keep ahead of the coach and six in uphill and down countries, but that in the plain they were glad to sign to the coachman with the pole to pull in, as they could not hold out. . . . . Since the roads have been made good, the carriages and cattle lightened, we have little of them; yet I remember he told us of vast performances, threescore miles a day, and seven miles an hour. . . . . The last exploit of one of them that I recollect was, the late Duke of Marlborough drove his phaeton and four, for a wager, from London to Windsor against one, and just beat him, but the poor fellow died soon. No carriage could have done Powell's York journey. They wore no breeches, but a short silk petticoat, kept down by a deep gold fringe."

Mr. Thoms adds that the late Duke of Queensbury was the last nobleman who kept running footmen in his retinue, and that he used to watch, from that celebrated balcony in Piccadilly, their paces before he engaged them.

Another, now defunct, member of a nobleman's establishment appears even, exceptionally, at the time we speak of, to have been the fool or jester. We see but little of him, it is true, during the last century, and, in truth, he appears then to have been "going out of fashion," but that he *was* one of its "curiosities," we know by Dean Swift's epitaph on the Earl of Suffolk's fool,

Whose name was Dicky Pearce.

"In Scotland," Sir Walter Scott tells us, in his Notes to "Waverley," "the custom subsisted till late in the last century," but it had no doubt become extinct in England some time before.

The scale of wages paid to domestic servants about the middle of the last century, may be gathered from some papers and records relating to one of the oldest baronial halls in England, bearing date 1756, and from which the following are selected:

|                                    | £ | s. | d. |
|------------------------------------|---|----|----|
| Head-man and park-keeper . . . . . | 3 | 3  | 0  |
| Groom . . . . .                    | 2 | 2  | 0  |
| Under-man . . . . .                | 2 | 12 | 6  |
| Housekeeper . . . . .              | 2 | 0  | 0  |
| Cookmaid . . . . .                 | 1 | 1  | 0  |
| Chamber and dairymaid . . . . .    | 1 | 2  | 6  |

The footmen were a presuming class, asserting strange rights at Westminster Hall and monstrous privileges in the theatres, as we shall subsequently show; but they were encouraged by a ridiculous statute which, up till 1770, protected the servants of peers from being arrested for debt during the sitting of parliament.

So much for private and domestic servants, and household retainers. Next let us glance at the *public* servants of the time, and especially the chairmen, shoeblacks, and linkbearers of London.

Of these the chairmen claim priority of notice as the superior class. The people, ever jealous of the rights of man, when they saw, for the first time, a sedan-chair, and that chair occupied by Charles I.'s favourite, Buckingham, did not relish the idea of beings of their own species taking the work of horses; but they soon grew accustomed to the sight, and during the whole of the last century the sedan was a favourite mode of conveyance to



the drawing-room, the levee, the theatre, the assembly, the masquerade, and the private party. We now seldom see it, except in the streets of Bath, carrying some dowager to the assembly-room, or in the streets of London, in its dilapidation, bearing an invalid pauper to the workhouse. The cry of "Chair! chair!" is superseded by that of "Cab! cab!" and horses take the place of men.

But it was a busy crew that assembled without the theatre doors during the hours of performance, or around the palace gate while the king held his levee, or the queen her drawing-room. And, when the entertainments were over, forth would issue the fashionable crowd, and impatient shouts of "Chair! chair!" would echo on all sides. Then the chairmen would suspend their mirth or quarrels to hand their passengers into their respective chairs, and each grasping the projecting handles, and slinging the leathern band across his shoulders, trot off, bearing between them their living burden, and followed by the motley crowd of link-bearers or lackeys.

Both in the ingress and egress of the passenger the top of the sedan was lifted up, to enable him to stand upright in it, and as soon as he was seated it was shut down, the front doors fastened, the blinds let down, or curtains drawn, and he was carried home in luxurious state.

Some of these sedans were elegantly fitted up, but the charges were very moderate; the terms generally being one shilling per hour, or a guinea for the week, which included the payment of the two bearers. These men were generally Irish, and were made useful as porters when not engaged in their regular calling. They were a thick-set, thick-legged race, and, either when com-

peting for a fare or regaling themselves upon their earnings, were such a noisy, turbulent, riotous set, as frequently to cause a general commotion in the street, which the poor old watchmen and constables could not easily suppress. They were also very often playfully, or, as some thought, mischievously disposed, and would run the poles of their chair into the stomach of a passer-by, trample on his toes, force him into the road, or, as Swift's chairmen did, squeeze him against the wall. "The chairmen that carried me squeezed a great fellow against the wall, who wisely turned his back, and broke one of the side glasses in a thousand pieces."—*Journal to Stella*, February 10, 1710-11.

The chairs kept by "people of quality" were trimmed and fitted up in a luxurious style. The Duchess of Marlborough had one carried away by some daring thieves while she was at Lincoln's Inn chapel, which had damask curtains and crimson velvet cushions; and the bearers were expensively caparisoned in cuffs, epaulettes, and laced hats. But the hackney-chairs were only furnished with cloth or leather seats, and white curtains. It is one of this inferior kind that is represented in Hogarth's "Arrest for Debt" scene of "The Rake's Progress;" and we are almost tempted to wonder, if we dared, why the artist did not represent, among the other acts of extravagance of the rake, the keeping of a private chair and chairmen.

The pleasures of this mode of riding through the streets are illustrated by Swift, in his description of the progress of a fop in rainy weather:

Boxed in a chair, the beau impatient sits,  
While spouts run clattering o'er the roof by fits,  
And ever and anon, with frightful din  
The leather sounds—he trembles from within!

Another public servant has vanished with the old and dilapidated pavements—the shoeblack.\* This functionary might be seen at the corners of streets with his little stock in trade—a three-legged stool, a ball of blacking, and a brush. Gay, in his “*Trivia*,” sends him forth to his calling with the following instructions:

Go thrive; at some frequented corner stand;  
 This brush I give thee—grasp it in thy hand;  
 Temper the foot within this vase of oil,  
 And let the little tripod aid the toil.  
 On this methinks I see the walking crew  
 At thy request support the miry shoe;  
 The foot grows black that was with dirt embrown'd,  
 And in thy pocket jingling halfpence sound.

He establishes himself accordingly at Charing-cross—a very profitable station one would conceive:

The youth straight chose his post, the labour ply'd,  
 Where branching streets from Charing-cross divide,  
 His treble voice resounds along the mews,  
 And Whitehall echoes, “Clean your honour’s shoes?”

The “stands” of these worthies were sometimes inherited, sometimes purchased, from the last possessor, and they must have been of some value, for the shoeblack’s gains at one time were not by any means inconsiderable—when the pavements abounded in loose and broken stones, and the roadways in holes and quagmires, from which the lumbering vehicles dashed a mass of mud over the foot-passengers; when crossing-sweepers were unknown, and the beau who was picking his way along the filthy pavements was subject to be trodden upon or run against by the trotting and often mischievous chair-

\* This passage was written before the establishment of the Shoeblack Brigade; but the Shoeblack of the last century was so totally different in all his characteristics, that it has not been thought necessary to erase it.



men ; when many of the less important streets had no footpaths at all, and the water-spouts from the overhanging roofs made great puddles in those that had them—but his gains were of course precarious, depending in a great measure on the state of the weather and the whereabouts of his station ; his earnings, however, have been estimated at not above eightpence or tenpence a day on the average of all but the first-rate stations. The shoe-blacks were generally cripples, whose infirmity prevented their adopting a more active pursuit.

While the improvements in the cleansing of London took away the trade of the shoeblack, the improvement in its lighting banished his compeer, the linkbearer. This wretched class was composed of the very poorest of lads and men—more generally the former ; and, half-clad, with a smoking flambeau in hand, they would crowd around the theatre doors, and show you to your chair or carriage, or run by your side to your home for a half-penny. But Gay does not give this unfortunate tribe a very good character, and insinuates that there was sometimes an understanding between them and the street thieves:

Though thou art tempted by the linkman's call,  
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall.  
In the midway he'll quench the flaming brand,  
And share the booty with the pilfering band.

The torchbearers of the upper classes wore the livery of their employers, and were a kind of under-footmen, who attended the carriage on its return from the theatre or the rout, lighted the family from the vehicle up the steps, and then, as the carriage rumbled away to the stables, and the heavy hall-door slammed to, thrust the flambeau into the

iron extinguisher at the side of the gate, till it ceased to glare with its broad red light and choking smoke upon the night.

In the midst of the dirt and darkness which called shoeblacks and linkbearers into requisition, another public servant rambled through the streets, or slumbered in his box—the watchman and patrol.


The Londoners of early times were content to sleep under the protection of their trained bands; then came the “marching watch,” who were peripatetic lamps as well; then the watchmen, such as they existed even into the present century, were preferred; and now we, more timid it may be than our grandsires, or having less implicit confidence in the strength and activity of decrepid watchmen, must needs be protected by day as well as night, and have our “districts” and “divisions” of policemen—strong, sturdy, hardy young fellows, who *can* protect us if they have the will; and who, unlike the aged, weak, and sleepy guardians of our grandfathers, have the prowess of youth and health to give effect to their staves and truncheons.

The police of the last century were certainly far from being an efficient or well-organised body. The infirm and decrepid, who were unable to work, and consequently compelled to apply to “the parish” for relief, were usually considered fit *at least* for watchmen, and watchmen they were accordingly made. A rattle, a staff, and a treble-caped great-coat were provided for them, and, with these insignia of their office the superannuated paupers were placed in a district, and on a certain “beat,” to protect the lives and properties of the inhabitants. With a little wooden “box” against the wall, to shelter him from rain

or storm (but in which he often snored away the greater portion of the night), and a lantern to light his path, the watchman tottered round his beat, announcing the hour as clearly as a husky cough of some ten years' standing would admit, and then retired to his box, to sleep until the revolution of another hour called him forth again.

"Pa—a—ast ten o'clock, and a rai—ny night!"—"Past two o'clock, and a cloudy mo—orning!" were the cries that occasionally aroused the citizen from his sleep, and enlightened him as to the hour and the state of the weather. But now and then there were more warlike sounds than these, and the springing of a rattle, or the feeble cries for "Help!" announced that a conflict was being carried on between the guardians of the night and some gang of desperate offenders. Of course, the bed-enconced cit was not insane enough in such a state of things to think of "helping," but got out of bed forthwith, tried the bolts, double-locked the door, and returned to his couch, wondering who would get the best of the affray. In these conflicts the "Charlies" (for it was one of the whims and fancies of the town to call them so) seldom came off scathless, and still more rarely victorious, till at length they refrained from interfering with any of the desperadoes who then infested London.

But the greatest tormentors of the poor old watchmen were the mischief-loving "bloods" and "bucks," who frequently devoted an evening to their especial annoyance. "Let us go out and tease the Charlies," some wag would suggest, as the night advanced and the drinking-party began to dissolve. All were anxious for the fray; and no sooner was the proposal made than forth would sally a little gang of the staggering bacchanals, intent upon





amusement at the expense of the helpless watch. Occasionally a drowsy sentinel would be caught napping in his box, and forthwith the box was overturned; or, still oftener, placed with its door against the wall, and the occupant left to get out of it when he awoke as best he could. At other times a loud cry of "Watch! watch!" would be raised, sufficiently loud to arouse the neighbourhood; and, when the sleepy patrol came bustling up, out of breath and out of humour, he was coolly told to return to his box, and "sleep it out." But human patience has a limit, and even the watchmen would sometimes be goaded to revenge. *Then* heavy blows were dealt promiscuously; and from the general affray, some such serious matters as a fractured skull or a broken arm might result.

The inefficiency of the watchmen in anything but trifling street brawls (and even from these they were often obliged to make a precipitate retreat), and the absence of a day watch, and of a *detective* police, called into existence the body that became afterwards known as "Bow-street Runners" (but who first took the name of the magistrate to whose office they were attached, as "Justice Wright's people," "Sir John Fielding's people," &c.), and distinguished by their activity, vigilance, and intelligence, as well as their basilisk influence over the thieves, who would seldom resist a capture or attempt a rescue, even when the officer went into their rendezvous, single-handed, to beckon out the man he "wanted" for a murder, street robbery, or burglary.

But the "thief-takers," who preceded them, had only a kind of semi-official character. One, William Norton, who was examined in a case of highway robbery, when

the Devizes coach was stopped near Hyde Park, on the 3rd of June, 1752, was asked how he got his living. The reply was characteristic of the period: "I keep a shop in Wych-street, and *sometimes I take a thief.*"

But on the subject of "thief-takers" we may perhaps enter more fully in another chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

## LITERATURE.

THE eighteenth century produced many authors whose works have become standard. History was enriched by the writings of Hume, Carte, Gibbon, Lyttleton, and Robertson—Philosophy and the Sciences, by Berkeley, Bradley, Hartley, Hunter, Adam Smith, Tooke, Black, Maskelyne, Porson, Herschel, Cavendish, and Playfair—Poetry, by Rowe, Gay, Young, Pope, Ramsay, Thomson, Shenstone, Collins, Akenside, Gray, Chatterton, Darwin, Warton, Beattie, Macpherson, and Burns—Romance, by Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett—Dramatic Literature, by D'Urfey, Cumberland, the Colmans, the Cibbers, the Sheridans, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Farquhar, Stevens, and Home—Theology, by Hoadley, Sherlock, Jortin, Warburton, Priestley, Law, Paley, and Price—Jurisprudence, by Blackstone; whilst, under the general designation of Miscellaneous writers, by turns poets, dramatists, essayists, and romancists, we have the glorious names of Swift, De Foe, Addison, Steele, Hawksworth, Sterne, Johnson, Goldsmith, Bolingbroke, Middleton, Walpole, and Burke. This century also saw the birth of those beautiful and original compositions, which sprang up with the "Tatler," the "Spectator," and the "Guardian," and came out under



the titles of the "Rambler," the "Idler," the "Adventurer," the "Bee," &c., till they formed a class of themselves, which have been justly named the "British Classics."

And yet how miserably were authors requited! Goldsmith's "Traveller" appears to have been sold for twenty guineas, and his "Vicar of Wakefield" only realised sixty guineas, which Dr. Johnson, having in view the scale of remuneration usually paid to authors at that time, says was "no mean price." But the price at which books were sold to the public was proportionately low—the general charge for a four-volume novel being only twelve shillings, or twelve shillings and sixpence, and five or six shillings for two volumes.

But we have forgotten ourselves. We are not writing the history of literature in the last century—we have only to describe what were its most curious characteristics.

The "getting up" of books was attended with many difficulties which the progress of art, science, and invention has since removed, in the typographical, illustrative, and even binding departments. We seldom meet with a book published within the century which is not calf-bound, with a cumbrous but elaborately-gilt back, the title-page frequently printed alternately in red and black ink, with an allegorical copper-plate frontispiece, a long preface, and a fulsome dedication.

Any one who has seen, or had the patience to read one of these dedications, would lament that so virtuous a generation should so completely have passed away, for we meet with none but accomplished dukes and intellectual earls, who are at once represented as the most generous, the most talented, and the most exemplary of mankind, ornaments of their species, and patterns for angels. But, in too many cases, the noblemen whose

virtues were emblazoned in such glowing colours, were the most ignorant and conceited blockheads in the country, otherwise they would have discouraged such disgusting flatteries. How different from the sketch which Horace has handed down of his accomplished patron, the courtly Mæcenas—how different from the simple and unaffected testimony which Goldsmith bears to Dr. Smollett, is the following inflated dedication of the play of the “Modern Prophets,” which is copied into No. 43 of the “Tatler.” The author, D’Urfey, thus addresses his patron: “Your easiness of humour, or rather your harmonious disposition, is so admirably mixed with your composure, that the rugged cares and disturbance that public affairs bring with them, that does so vexatiously affect the heads of other great men of business, etc., does scarce ever ruffle your unclouded brow even with a frown. And that above all is praiseworthy, you are so far from thinking yourself higher than others, that a flourishing and opulent fortune which, by a certain natural corruption in its quality, seldom fails to affect other possessors with pride, seems in this case as if only providentially disposed to enlarge your humility. But I find, sir, I am now got into a very large field, where, though I could, with great ease, raise a number of plants in relation to your merits of this plauditory nature, yet, for fear of an author’s general vice, and lest the plain justice I have done you should, by my proceeding and others’ mistaken judgment, be imagined flattery (a thing the bluntness of my nature does not care to be concerned with, and which I also know you abominate),” &c., &c. To complete the absurdity of this string of compliments, it is only necessary to add that the person to whom they were addressed was an illiterate citizen, who, having amassed a considerable fortune, was enabled to retire

from business, and, by its means, to purchase flattery, consideration, and ultimately knighthood! Well might Steele say: "It is wonderful to see how many judges of these fine things spring up every day, in the rise of stocks, and other elegant methods of abridging the way to learning and criticism!" The "Guardian," No. 4, on the same subject, says truly enough: "This prostitution of praise is not only a deceit upon the gross of mankind, who take their notion of character from the learned, but also the better sort must by this means lose some part at least of that desire of fame which is the incentive to generous actions, when they find it promiscuously bestowed on the meritorious and undeserving."

The origin of these dedications may be found in the previous century, when the author was compelled to propitiate some man of eminence to introduce his book to the world. Booksellers being few, country agencies almost unknown, and the means of advertising scanty, there was great difficulty in ensuring the expenses even of publication—hence the mode of procuring a sale for a book was very different to what it is at present. A poet or author projected a work, issued the proposals, and, having to take upon himself the risk of printing, opened a list of subscribers previous to its commencement, and to head this list, and induce other subscribers to follow, he generally sought the favour of some high nobleman, or fashionable butterfly of the town who had somehow or other picked up a reputation as a man of taste. This practice, no doubt, partly led to the extravagance of the dedications. Then, again, a man of letters was in the last century, as a jester had been in the previous one, a sort of indispensable attendant at the tables of the great—if he had published but one dull book it was sufficient—it was "fashion-



able" to have one in your patronage: almost in dependence. He was to furnish his host with ready-made opinions upon all fashionable topics, to applaud every word, and laugh heartily at every abortion of a joke that fell from his lips; he was to laud him to the skies, and declare him at once the gentleman and the scholar, and, like a lap-dog, to submit to the splenetic humours of the great man, when he chose to be out of temper, without complaining. And, whenever the poor, dependent author wrote a tragedy or a sermon, a novel or a history, he was expected to dedicate it to his patron, and to inform him—and, at the same time, the world at large—that he was the very personification of virtue and excellence, and the *beau-ideal* of a man of taste. And oh! the agonies of fear, apprehension, and suspense that awaited the unhappy author, when, in order to make known his work and to swell his list of subscriptions, he sallied forth with both of them in his pocket to read his manuscript, by gracious invitation, before some party of would-be-thought *cognoscenti* of both sexes at his patron's house—the half-suppressed sneers, the ironical applause, the drowsy inattention, the unseemly and ludicrous interruptions, the many conflicting suggestions of alteration!

And thus was the poor poet of the eighteenth century compelled to prostrate himself at the feet of some ignorant peer or clownish knight; to subscribe himself his "most devoted slave to command," and to prostitute his talents to the degrading task of sketching an exemplary and angelic character to clothe a dissipated and vulgar patron in. He could not hope for success without patronage, and he could not purchase patronage without flattery. Even this abuse has not escaped the keen picture-satirist, Hogarth; and in the second scene of the *Rake's Progress* we

see a poem lying on the floor dedicated to the young rake, and an humble poet waiting in the obscure background for the honour of recognition.

These dedications were introduced among a perfect blaze of italics and capitals, and, by dint of large type and "leading," were made to occupy pretty well a third of the volume, and to become the most conspicuous portion. They were also illustrated or embellished with cherubim, little fauns, and a hundred other devices, crowded into a coarsely-executed woodcut—a parallelogram at the heading of the dedication, in which angels, satyrs, and fauns were flying about in the most glorious hurry and confusion, proclaiming with horns and trumpets the manifold virtues of the patron. We have before us an "Epistle to the Jews," in which this rectangular device contains a panoramic view of a city, all steeples, with a blank along the centre, probably to represent the river, a short squat monument, with a flame at the top bigger than itself, and a sun surrounded by a glory, encircling its fat face, like the hair standing on end, and with elaborated eyes, nose, and mouth, nicely poised on one of the steeples. Then the first letter of the first paragraph, the initial of the dedication, was to be found lurking in a tree, or hiding behind a hedge, in a small square vignette—now the most conspicuous object in a rural landscape, with a shepherd, perhaps, leaning against it for support—now borne high among the clouds. And then, at the conclusion, came another rectangle, as full of angels, urns, armorial bearings, initials, scroll-work, and fancy designs as the first.

But, returning to the authors: even the poet who enjoyed the highest patronage—the poet laureate of the king—was expected to wield a servile pen. On "His

Majesty's Recovery," on "The New Year," and on "His Majesty's Birthday," an ode must be written by the laureate, and set to music by the "Doctor of Music," who catered for the court, "to be performed before their majesties." Colley Cibber, Pye, and William Whitehead, were all marvellously fond of heroes, and, in their odes, successively beat each other in marvelling whether any of the heroes of antiquity could possibly have come near the king their master in courage, learning, or worth. "Cæsar," "Augustus," and "Britannia's Lord," were the appellations most frequently conferred upon the king; and Cibber, in one of his odes, even went so far as to denominate him

Lord supreme o'er all the earth.

But the following "Recitative" of the "Ode for the King's Birthday," in 1756, written by Cibber, and set to music by Dr. Boyce, may be taken as a pretty fair sample of these effusions:

When Cæsar's natal day  
Demands our annual lay,  
What empire of the earth explored  
Can hope to raise  
A pyramid of praise  
Superior to Britannia's Lord?

And here is the "Air" of another of Cibber's odes:

In Rome, when fam'd Augustus lived,  
Had then the lyrist of his praise  
To this *more godlike reign* survived,  
What glories now had graced his lays!

In the "Ode on the New Year," 1757, the same poet repeats himself thus:



*Air*—Had the lyrist of old  
 Had our Cæsar to sing,  
 More rapid his raptures had roll'd—  
 But never had Greece such a king.

*Chorus*—No,—never had Greece such a king!

George II. has been characterised as deficient in taste, but he certainly displayed some judgment in using the expression which is imputed to him, if he bore in mind these fulsome odes, when he exclaimed, in his bad English:

“D—— the bainters and the boets too!”

Pye does not appear to have been so bad as the other laureates. His “Ode for the King’s Birthday,” in 1789, composed immediately after the recovery of George III. from the first attack of that illness which subsequently gave occasion for a regency, was most exulting, but we had nothing about Cæsar in it:

In the royal sufferer’s smart  
 Each beholder bore a part;  
 Rumour gave th’ afflicting tale  
 In sighings to the passing gale,  
 That bosoms never wont to sigh  
 Were clogged with speechless agony.  
 When royal bosoms teem with woe,  
 When royal eyes with tears o’erflow,  
 Can the private heart refrain  
 Mingling in this mighty pain?  
 Contagious grief, in that affecting hour  
 How wide, how gen’ral was thy power!  
 Sad was each gesture—every step was slow,  
 Silent each tongue, and every look was woe;  
 The supplicating eye presumed alone,  
 To beg compassion at the Heavenly Throne.

Making every allowance for poetic licence, it must be admitted that all this was gross exaggeration, or enthusiasm run mad. Sympathise with the royal sufferer and his afflicted family no doubt every one of feeling did, but one would think, from Mr. Pye’s verses, that the whole nation

was bowed down with the most intense grief, and completely unfitted for its ordinary every-day avocations. As a lady of the court said to a jealous rival, who had called her by a name we do not choose to repeat, although a lady of the family name is now lying on our slipper, "Your language is very figurative." Very figurative, indeed, Mr. Pye!

These birthday odes were performed before the king by his band and choir, and were regularly reported in the papers of the following day. After going the round of the periodical press of the country, they were consigned to the oblivion to which they were only suited, and the laureate's absurdities about "Cæsar's gentle sway," and "England's godlike king," were forgotten by the few who had waded, half dreaming, through their unmeaning and insipid length, before the page which contained them was fairly passed.

Another class of literary absurdities with which our periodicals were filled, were the "Eastern tales" and "Oriental fables," which were vamped up by any writer who could collect a sufficient number of Asiatic proper names, and talk about sultans, genii, diamonds, precious silks, and Bagdad, after the manner of the "Arabian Nights." The Eastern tales of the "Adventurer" were copied, and increased and multiplied to such an extent, that Goldsmith was obliged to take the nuisance in hand, and deal severely with it in the "Citizen of the World." Then there were tales of English life, all "founded on fact, and embellished with an elegant copper-plate engraving," in most of the magazines—mathematical problems in some—odes, acrostics, prologues, and epilogues—the unblushing scandals of intrigue and amours distinguishing the *Town and Country Magazine*—an "Historical Regis-

ter of Foreign and Domestic Intelligence"—"News from the Plantations in America"—births, marriages, and deaths—promotions in the army and navy—ecclesiastical preferments—"Persons declared B——pts"—prices of the funds and market reports—lists of the month's performances at the theatres—and, in fact, all the features of a newspaper. The *Universal Magazine* supported its right to the title it had assumed by "combining news, letters, debates, poetry, music, biography, history, geography, voyages, criticism, translations, philosophy, mathematicks, husbandry, gardening, cookery, chymistry, mechanicks, trade, navigation, architecture, and other arts and sciences, which may render it instructive and entertaining to gentry, merchants, farmers, and tradesmen; to which occasionally will be added an impartial account of books in several languages, and of the state of learning in Europe; also of the stage, new operas, plays, and oratorios."

Literary coteries were formed at the several coffee-houses in London. "Button's," which was famed for the lion's mouth letter-box, in which communications for the "Spectator" were to be dropped; the "Grecian," from which the literary article of the "Tatler" was dated; and "John's," were the most favourite resorts of the wits in the early part of the century, the "Saint James's" at a later period of it, and "Dolly's Chop-house," in Paternoster-row, towards its close. The publishers had begun to emigrate from Old London Bridge, on which most of the booksellers' shops had exhibited their huge signs, such as the "Looking-glass," the "Black Boy," and the "Three Bibles" (which were the last, we believe, to quit the old bridge), and were now located in Paternoster-row, Saint Paul's Churchyard, and Little Britain. One (Dodsley) actually got so far west as Pall-mall, and some hovered



“over against Saint Dunstan’s Church, in Fleet-street,” but the majority of them still clung to Saint Paul’s and its neighbourhood.

During the latter end of the century, their shops afforded a nucleus for the wits and literary spirits of the age. Thomas Davies, who had taken his part on the stage in tragedy, and who was described by Churchill in the “Rosciad” as

Statesman all over, in plots famous grown,  
He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone,

(more completely immortalised in these lines than by his own “Life of Garrick”), kept a bookseller’s shop in Russell-street, Covent-garden. Hither resorted Johnson and his shadow, Boswell, Goldsmith, Churchill, Foote, Bennett Langton, George Stevens, Dr. Percy (of ancient ballad fame), Robert Dodsley (the collector of contemporary poetry), and Warburton; and scandal says Davies’s pretty wife was the original attraction, Johnson’s society the second. Churchill corroborates the delicate suspicion:

With him came mighty Davies; on my life!  
That fellow has a very pretty wife.

Alexander Stephens mentions, of a later time, Almon’s shop as being the resort of Fox, Norfolk, Wilkes, Burke, Barré, and others; and Debrett’s as frequented by John Nicholls, David Williams, the Rev. Mr. Este, Major Cartwright, and other minor celebrities, who on Debrett’s failure, were compelled to remove their *conversazioni* to Ridgway’s, in Piccadilly. But we are now crossing the threshold of the nineteenth century, and coming to the days of Murray. Let us step back within our prescribed limits.

Anonymous writing was much in vogue among the authors of the last century—or rather, perhaps, we should say, writing under assumed appellations. The severity with which the law of libel was put in force and stretched even beyond the letter of the law, in order to reach some obnoxious partisan writer, was doubtless one inducement for the concealment of real names in print, but the works of Addison, Steele, and Cave, required no screen of this sort. Yet the “Tatler” appeared as the production of “Isaac Bickerstaff,” the “Guardian” as that of “Nestor Ironside,” and the *Gentleman’s Magazine* was edited by “Sylvanus Urban, Gent.”—a fiction which is still kept up. Political writers, with better, or at least more obvious reasons, sheltered themselves under fanciful signatures, as Bolingbroke wrote for the *Craftsman* as “Humphrey Oldcastle.” The celebrated strictures upon the Government on its conduct in the issue of Wood’s Irish halfpence, although written by Dean Swift, were signed “M. B., Drapier in Dublin,” and have ever since gone by the name of “The Drapier’s Letters.” The immense popularity of these letters, which were hawked about the streets at a penny each, and even posted up in taverns and public rooms, gave an alarming importance to the subject, and procured the desired result—the recal of Wood’s patent—a result which led to the canonisation of Swift as a patriot, on grounds which appear to us less deserving of it than many of his previous exertions for the people and the country. Fielding conducted the *Covent Garden Journal* under the name of “Sir Alexander Drawcanzir,” and the *Jacobite’s Journal* as “John Trotplaid;” and Horace Walpole brought out his “Castle of Otranto” as a translation by “William Marshall,” from the Italian; Defoe’s “Treatise on Spirits” came forth as

the work of "John Beaumont, Esq.," and his "Essay on Apparitions" under the name of "Morton;" but prosecution, if not persecution, made this gifted writer shy of appearing *in propria personâ*, and he frequently concealed himself behind the mask of an assumed name. Then came great "Junius," the most mysterious political writer that ever assailed a government, and whose secret, most probably, despite all that has been conjectured, and the hundreds of pamphlets written upon it, died with his courageous publisher, Woodfall. "Peter Pindar," afterwards avowed as Dr. Walcott, next attracted attention by his bitter satires of the sovereign; often objectionable—even spiteful—witty and searching at the best. Even the newspapers came out under fictitious authorship; the *Old Westminster Journal* was edited "by Simon Gentletouch, of Pall-mall, Esquire," the *Craftsman* by "Caleb D'Anvers" (Amherst); and in fact the brains were racked for distinctive signatures, some presenting curious alliterations, others indicative of the quality or pretensions of the writer. This practice, and the manners of the times, scarcely purged of the licentiousness of a previous age, afforded authors a latitude which would now be considered gross indecency—a latitude of which Swift, Sterne, Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson alike availed themselves, and the dramatists were allowed to exercise to its fullest extent, and push to its very furthest limit.

We are now come to the newspapers of the eighteenth century, which might almost be looked upon as being in their infancy, seeing that no regular newspaper made its appearance until 1621. The press, however, travelled quickly, and the newspapers of the time were by no means such contemptible productions as they have been represented. It is with us a question whether the Stamp Act



of 1712 did not aid them in their progress, and elevate their character. Previously to that date they had been nothing more than pamphlets, presenting sometimes only a single topic of news—"halfpenny posts," and "farthing posts." The imposition of a halfpenny stamp raised their price, and made people look for more for their money, causing the writers to take more pains in their compilation, and introducing a better class of editors and publishers, and more information, put together in a better form. Such men as Swift, De Foe, Dr. Johnson, Prior, Addison, Steele, Fielding, and Hawkesworth, became connected with newspaper literature, and the tone of the public press began manifestly to improve. It was in the eighteenth century that the newspaper became something more than a pamphlet of news, and grew into an organ of public opinion. We must bear in mind the rigid enforcement of the law of libel which was common in this century—the primitiveness which still hung about the process of printing: the rust of the chains which had prevented the spread of learning—and the great difficulties of communication between parts now not a day's journey distant, before we condemn the newspaper of the eighteenth century, or put it in comparison with that of the nineteenth. Intelligence, too, had not spread among the masses; and although there was, as Addison and Goldsmith have both remarked, a great appetite for *news* among the public, there was not so much anxiety for *information*.

Having duly taken these things into account, we may now glance at the newspapers of the time, and form a correct judgment of their merits. Reports of debates in parliament were unknown until Edward Cave, the founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine*—a name which deserves to be held illustrious as the "kind Mæcenas" of Dr. Johnson

—contrived to procure the substance of them for publication in his magazine. His mode of proceeding, according to Sir John Hawkins, was to procure admission for himself and a friend or two into the gallery of the House of Commons, or some obscure corner of the House of Lords, and there privately take down notes of the speakers' names, and the general tendencies of their arguments, then retire to a neighbouring tavern to compare and adjust their notes, so that, with the aid of their memories, they were enabled to give a tolerably correct report of the substance of the debates. These reports were tacitly sanctioned for nearly two years, when the House of Commons passed a resolution showing how little its members relished their constituents being enlightened as to their doings:

“*April* 13, 1738.—Resolved, that it is an high indignity to, and notorious breach of the privileges of, this House, for any newswriter, in letters or other papers, in minutes, or under any other denomination, or for any printer or any publisher of any printed newspaper of any denomination, to presume to insert, in the said letters or papers, or to give therein any account of the debates or other proceedings of this House, or any Committee thereof, as well during the recess as the sitting in Parliament; and that this House will proceed with the utmost severity against any and all such offenders.”

But the fertile brain of Cave was not to be balked in this design by any threat of pains and penalties, but invented an ingenious scheme for continuing his reports; and, in June, 1738, first appeared, in the *Historical Chronicle*, forming a supplement to his magazine, “An Appendix to Captain Lemuel Gulliver’s Account of the famous Empire of Lilliput,” headed “Debates in the

Senate of Great Lilliput." "Blefuscu" represented France. The Dukes were "Nardacs," the Lords "Hurgoes," and the Commoners "Clinabs;" the letters in their respective names being slightly transposed or disarranged, as, "the Nardac Befdort" (Duke of Bedford), "the Hurgo Toblat" (Lord Talbot), "Sir Rob. Wallilup" (Wallpole), "Lettyltno" (Lyttelton), "Brustath" (Bathurst), "Feaukes" (Fox), "Ooyn" (Wynn), &c. &c. Guthrie, the historian, arranged these debates for Cave; but, in 1740, Dr. Johnson, who had associated himself with Cave, undertook the reporting. Mr. Nicholls says that Johnson himself told him that he used only to "fix upon a speaker's name, then to make an argument for him and conjure up an answer;" but he deeply repented of the fraud before he died. Dr. Hawkesworth succeeded Johnson, and on April 3, 1747, Cave, as well as Astley of the *London Magazine*, were ordered into the custody of the Usher of the Black Rod, "complaint having been made against them for printing in their respective magazines an account of the trial of Simon Lord Lovat." After several harassing examinations, they received a reprimand and were discharged from custody, on paying the fees, "begging pardon of the House, and promising never to offend in like manner again."

Cave's enterprising spirit would not bear the curb, and in 1752 he again published his parliamentary debates, though in a conciser form, and in the shape of a letter prefaced by the following noble rebuke: "The following heads of speeches in the H—— of C—— were given me by a gentleman, who is of opinion that members of parliament are accountable to their constituents for what they say as well as what they do in their legislative capacity; that no honest man who is entrusted with the liberties and



purses of the people will ever be unwilling to have his whole conduct laid before those who so entrusted him without disguise—that, if every gentleman acted upon this just, this honourable, this constitutional principle, the electors themselves only would be to blame if they re-elected a person guilty of a breach of so important a trust.”

Some years afterwards we find the debates reported as “Proceedings in the two Political Club-rooms,” when the speakers were dubbed with the names of the ancient Romans, as “Marcus Cato,” for the Earl of Bath; “Caius Claudius Nero,” for the Earl of Winchelsea; “Cn. Falorius,” for Fox; and “Julius Florus” for Pitt—a key to the names being given during the recess of the parliament.

Up to the year 1782 the names of the speakers were still expressed by the initials, or the first and last letters, with a dash, or a sufficient number of asterisks to denote the other letters. It was amusing enough to find P. Ventidius, Q. Maximus, M. Cato, Cn. Domitius Calvinus, and A. Posthumius resuscitated in the *London Magazine* of 1750, and engaged in a debate on the English Mutiny Bill; but when we find, some years afterwards, Mr. B\*\*\*e resisting a motion before the House for immediately arresting the printers who have dared to publish its proceedings, we think he was worthy of a better fate, and that so noble a champion of a popular and constitutional right ought to have his name emblazoned in full as EDMUND BURKE.

## CHAPTER X.

## NEWSPAPERS.

WHILST the House of Commons struggled for its trumpet privilege through the greater part of the century, the law courts held over the Press their law of libel, with pillories, fines, imprisonments, and other punishments in case of an infringement of it. The distracted publishers were then compelled to allude to the king only as "a certain illustrious personage," or "a great person of state;" and, on the 26th June, 1790, the printer of the *Dublin Morning Post* stood in the pillory on College-green for copying a paragraph from the London papers which stated that "The —— was formerly a very domestic woman, but now gives up too much of her time to politics." Nay, even the lists of bankrupts are simply headed "B——pts," lest the full expression of the term might give offence.

It is curious to observe the love of scandal struggling with the fear of prosecution. Here is an extract from the *Political Register* of May, 1758, reflecting on the Duke of Grafton's connexion with Nancy Parsons, which will convey an idea of the appearance of newspapers while under these restrictions:

"Towards the close of the last session, the F——t L——d of the T——y was *missing*. In a day or two it

came out that his G——e was gone down to the sea-coast with Miss N——y P——s, to attend her on board a vessel for France. About the end of March an express arrived at Dover; ordering one of the packets to be got ready for the *confidential* S——y of the T——y. He came in the evening, and embarked for Calais. Various were the speculations of the people of Dover on the purport of this embassy at such a busy time. Lo! the S——y returned with his errand, Miss N——y P——s in his hand. On Wednesday, the 14th of April, his G——e attended Mrs. H——n, *commonly* called Miss N——y P——s, to Ranelagh, and the Saturday following he introduced her to the Opera, and sat behind her in waiting. . . . It is only the prerogative of a F——t M——r to appear with his mistress in public, and to show her more respect than he ever showed his wife."

In the November number of the same publication is a dialogue between the duke and an imaginary admirer, which exhibits the same features:

"Q. Who made you P——e M——r?"

"A. Some little assurance, and a great deal of b——gh interest." And so on.

Having shown *why* the newspapers of the last century ought not in fairness to be compared with those of the present, we will point out *in what respects* they were deficient. In the first place, in point of size, they were not more than an eighth of that of the double *Times* in the early part of the century; and even in 1777, *Lloyd's Evening Post* was no larger, but most of the other papers of that period had grown to about a quarter of the usual size of the present daily papers. The paper was of a coarser texture, and the type larger; but it is of the contents we now propose giving a specimen or two. In the



news department we might frequently find paragraphs worded similarly to the following, or of as much import:

"Last Tuesday night, as two old foolish watchmen, in Sugarloaf-court, Leadenhall-street, were sporting with each other, one unluckily struck the other a blow in the eye with his staff, which occasioned it to bleed in a shocking manner! No fools like the old fools."—*Westminster Journal*, April 22, 1775.

"We hear there is likely to be the greatest opposition ever known in the memory of man for the choice of churchwardens for the parish of St. Peter in Cornhill."—*Ibid.*

The tone in which discussions were sometimes carried on between papers in rival interests, may be fairly illustrated by an extract from the controversy on the Bank Contract for circulating the South Sea Company's bonds. We must premise that Caleb D'Anvers, of the *Craftsman*, was opposed to the contract, and that Francis Walsingham, of the *Daily Gazetteer*, and "Mr. Osborn" (an assumed name), who formerly wrote the *London Journal*, but had incorporated his paper with the *Gazetteer*, were its advocates. We must also add that the editorial style was generally the singular number, and that rival editors addressed each other personally and by name, which would now be considered a breach of etiquette. The *Craftsman*, then, of August the 23rd, 1735, heads its article thus:

"Remarks upon Mother Osborn's account of the Bank Contract."\*

And commences in this strain :

\* Fast by, like Niobe, her children gone,  
Sits Mother Osborn, stupified to stone.

Pope's "Dunciad," added to Canto II., after 1738.

“About two years ago this feminine dotard, through the promptings of her ignorance, with the assistance of her venality, was led into an avowal of doctrines that were perfectly infamous.”

And on the 6th of September the same paper—not a scurrilous publication, but the organ of a respectable party—alludes to the editor of the *Gazetteer* as “that low tool, Walsingham”—“a contemptible fellow, who is retained on purpose to assert falsehoods, and will either disavow or persist in them just as you” (Sir Robert Walpole) “are pleased to direct and pay him for it.” On September the 10th, the editors of the *Daily Gazetteer* reply on the part of Walpole, denouncing “the authors of the *Craftsman*” as “grovelling, abandoned, and despicable implements of slander;” and in the same paper of the 30th of August, Osborn had replied to the *Craftsman*’s attacks upon him in the following elegant and dignified manner:

“Whereas a certain tall, impudent A——y\* (eminently distinguished by his villanies in all parts of life), who suborned evidences to hang his benefactor that gave him bread when he was not able to purchase it, and was told in open court by Lord Chief Justice Raymond, in my hearing, that he and his confederates would have been hanged in any other country, is again admitted to be one of the writers of the *Craftsman*, and has last week thrown together a parcel of Billingsgate words about Mr. Osborn.”

This intemperate language was not confined to the two journals in question, for *Fog’s Journal* of July the 19th, in the same year, in a parody on an address of Walsingham’s, makes him to say, “We never had any regard to truth,” that he “was hired,” “trimmed in laced livery,” and so on. And all this storm was about a simple ques-

\* Attorney.

tion of the privileges of the Bank! But it will serve to show how high party feeling ran at the time, and how it washed before it all considerations of propriety, delicacy, or gentlemanly feeling. Well might Pulteney write (1731), "There has been more Billingsgate stuff uttered from the press within these two months than ever was known before." But even then it had not arrived at its height.

We question whether any papers of the present day would venture, or condescend to allow themselves such latitude as the journalists of the eighteenth century sometimes allowed themselves in speaking of the ministers of the day. We select a few choice specimens:

"A correspondent observes that the trading part of this nation have great reason to be alarmed at the dismal prospect of the approaching ruin of this once flourishing nation. We who once gave laws to all other kingdoms and powers are now become the scorn of all the world, and it must be so while such men—such wretches as Jemmy Twitcher,\* a despicable but arbitrary junto, preside over us! A change of men and a change of measures—oh, how devoutly to be wished for by every lover of religion, trade, and liberty!"—*Old British Spy*, May 22nd, 1779.

"A constant reader asks if that kingdom must not become very despicable where land admirals are employed to conduct the navy? where trade and commerce are neglected? where religion and virtue are despised? where a prince, obstinate and self-conceited, spends his hours in looking into watches, making of buttons, and playing with ivory toys; whilst the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war strikes every thinking man with

\* The Earl of Sandwich, Secretary of State.



astonishment and dismay, none knowing where, when destruction and infatuation begin, they will end."—*Ibid.*

"A lover of morality recommends it to all sorts of people to be righteously, soberly, and godly during the approaching holidays, commonly called Whitsuntide. As our adorable Creator causes his rain to descend and his sun to shine upon us, filling our hearts with food and gladness, let not the blasphemous oath, the obscene jest, nor drunkenness and fornication, which ought not to be known among Christians, be heard or seen amongst us. So shall righteousness exalt our nation, which now groans under the decay of trade, the load of taxes, the prospect of a bloody, tedious, and expensive war with our Protestant brethren in America and our Popish enemies in France and Spain."—*Ibid.*

"A correspondent asks, if parliament should pass a vote for distributing the widows and orphans' money entrusted to the Lord Chancellor, towards the support of Britons, to embrue their hands and swords in American blood, good God! what will become of our stocks and funds? Do not men of genius and calculation already fear that our Three per Cents. will be worth no more than fifty pounds for an hundred? Forbid it, good Lord! that ever England should be so reduced that the widows and orphans' money, like their tears, should be expended and applied to serve the vile purposes of such men as Jemmy Twitcher, Sir Hugh Paleface, drunken Rigdum, &c. &c. On the contrary, God grant we may see such golden days as when Cumberland, Richmond, Rockingham, and Kettel may have the guide and lead of our Treasury, our army and navy!"—*Old British Spy, Feb. 20, 1779.*

"A correspondent observes that, since the days of the great Sir Walter Rawley, perhaps no man has received so

much deserved applause as the magnanimous Admiral Keppel: an ornament to society, a real friend to his king and country. May those venal ministers,\* who have long made the hungry curse their birth, be driven from before the throne; and may England once more see a virtuous ministry restored, that our king may reign the happy ruler of a free, loyal, and trading nation."—*Ibid.*

Enough of this ribaldry! We have quoted sufficient to show that argument was a weapon unknown to our newspaper controvertists—mere vituperation: the foul vapour from their venomous mouths was all they had to make an attack with.

Now for a specimen of a political article, *not* communicated, at a time when "leading articles" were unknown. It is perfectly terrific in its display of italics and capitals:

"The French, it seems, despairing of carrying their Point by *Insinuations*, have recurred to their old Method of *Threatening*, and, by their *proper Herald*, the *Amsterdam Gazette*, menace us with *Fishing Barks*, *flat-bottom'd Boats*, *Troops on the Coast*, or, in their *own Phrase*, nothing less than a *Descent upon England*. In this Situation, the first Thing to be done is to enquire into the *State* of our *MILITIA*, more especially in the *Maritime Counties*, and, if there be *any* in which the *MILITIA* is not *raised* pursuant to the *Laws* for that *Purpose*, to enquire strictly into the *Cause*; in which we presume that we point at nothing but what is *just*, and that Statutes are made to be *obeyed*, as the *Excise* and *Customs* are levied in *one County* as well as in *another*."—*London Evening Post*, February 6th, 1759.

\* The Grenville Administration.

Here is emphasis—here are irony and sarcasm, lurking, like daggers, behind an Italian cloak! But all these italics might have been spared, and a scrap of rhyme, with very little trouble, would have expressed as much—in fact, the words almost resolve themselves into it:

If the militia's not raised pursuant to the laws,  
The first thing to be done is to inquire the cause :  
It is nothing but just, for statutes are made  
For the purpose, we think—to be duly obey'd.

In the advertisement department, we have all sorts of extraordinary announcements, from the chandler's, who (in one of the Norwich papers in 1723) wants a journeyman "that has had the small-pox," to the notice of a horse being stolen (in the same paper), with a coarse representation of the thief riding the horse to the gallows with the devil in pursuit. The proprietors seem to have had no idea of making this department a large source of revenue; for, during the general election of 1774, some of the papers actually announce that they must decline inserting the separate addresses of the candidates, and merely give a list of their names, as, if they published all the advertisements in full, they would encroach too much upon the news department, due to their readers! They had no idea then of colossal supplements, double numbers, or of realising a large revenue from advertisements alone. Verily, they were the men who would not make hay when the sun shone!

Such, at this time, was the difficulty in procuring news, even sufficient to fill these diminutive sheets, that, as late as 1752, the editor of the *Leicester Journal* was compelled to fill up his columns with a reprint of the Bible, which he continued weekly—the said *Leicester Journal* being,



by the way, then *printed in London*, and sent down (as were others of the same period, in the absence of local printing-presses) to the place of which it purported to be the chronicle for publication!

Another "curiosity" in newspaper antiquities was the *News Letter*, which was introduced by Ichabod Dawks in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and which consisted of the news of the week, with a blank fly-sheet attached, "so that any gentleman may write his own private business." The *News Letters* of Mr. Dawks and of Mr. Dyer are playfully alluded to by the "Spectator."

Some singular announcements of the prices of newspapers claim our attention before closing this subject. In 1706, the price of the *Norwich Postman*, then "printed for S. Sheffield, by T. Goddard, bookseller, Norwich," in a small quarto sheet, was stated as "charge, one halfpenny—but a penny not refused;" and in 1723, the proprietor of the *Norwich Gazette, or Henry Crossgrove's News*, thus announced a rise in the price of his journal: "This is to inform my friends that on Saturday next this newspaper will be sold at a penny, and continue at that price. The reason of my raising to a penny is, because I cannot afford to sell it under any longer, and I hope none of my customers will think it dear at a penny, since they shall always have the first intelligence, besides other diversions." This amusing notice is sufficiently candid, but we opine that the public of the present day would require a more detailed explanation.

We have, perhaps, extended this chapter to an undue length by devoting too much space to one particular branch of the subject, but newspaper history at this

period is full of curiosities, and we will close it with one of the most unique of them all—the opening prospectus of the *Salisbury Postman*, in 1715:

“The *Salisbury Postman*, or *Pacquet of Intelligence* from France, Spaine, Portugal, &c., Saturday, September 27th, 1715. No. 1.

“\* \* \* This paper contains an abstract of the most material occurrences of the whole week, foreign and domestick, and will be continued every post, provided a sufficient number will subscribe for its encouragement.

“If two hundred subscribe, it shall be delivered to any private or publick-house in town every Monday, Thursday, and Saturday morning by eight of the clock during the winter season, and by six in the summer, for three halfpence each.

“Any person in the countrie may order it by the post-coach, carriers, or market people, to whom they shall be carefully delivered.

“It shall be always printed in a sheet and a half, and on as good paper; but this, containing the whole week’s news, can’t be afforded under twopence.

“NOTE.—For encouragement of all those that may have occasion to enter advertisements, this paper will be made publick in every market town, forty miles distant from this city, and several will be sent as far as Exeter.

“Besides the news, we perform all other matters belonging to our art and mystery, whether in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, algebra, mathematicks, &c.

“Printed by Samuel Farley, at his office, adjoining to Mr. Robert Silcock’s, on the ditch in Sarum, anno 1715.”

This voluminous title occupied two pages out of the two sheets of small folio of which this first number of the paper was composed. Part of the intelligence appears to

be taken from the London papers, but one portion is declared to be "all from the written letter." An ingenious correspondent of one of the London magazines has made the following calculation of the income of a paper of this description:

"The entire income of the paper, to meet every expense, including its delivery to subscribers—no trifling matter, we may infer, in the then imperfect state of the post-office deliveries, and which must have rendered special messengers indispensable to its circulation—the entire income amounted to no more than twenty-five shillings each number, or three pounds fifteen shillings per week."

How insignificant a figure must the provincial press have made in those days, taking it at this estimate! How humble must have been its workers—how cramped its means of gaining or of giving information!



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE DRAMA.

THE satire of Hogarth upon the taste of the age in which we find the world of fashion crowding to masquerades and conjurers' exhibitions, while the works of Shakspeare, Jonson, and the standard dramatists are being vended as waste-paper, was, no doubt, to a great extent, provoked; but it must be admitted that the legitimate drama had its palmy days in the eighteenth century. Never had it had such an interpreter as Garrick, Betterton, Foote, Quin, Rich, Kemble—how do names of various eminence and degrees of talent, but all of note, crowd upon us when we speak of the stage of which our grandfathers speak so highly, and with so much disparagement of that of our own day! Truly they must be admitted to have some degree of truth on their side, if they have a good deal of prejudice.

But we *are* enabled to find one fault from which our stage now-a-days is pretty well free. The managers, perhaps, thinking the talent of their actors must excuse every negligence on their part, bestowed very little care in several details upon the manner in which their pieces were put upon the stage. This was more particularly observable in the inconsistency of costume which was displayed:

national distinctions were disregarded, and all kinds of discrepancies, incongruities, and anomalies perpetrated, the heroes of previous centuries appearing in the discarded court-dresses of the nobility of the eighteenth. *Cato*, for instance, was represented "in a long wig, flowered gown, and lackered chair"—*Macbeth* was dressed in the style of the reigning monarch—and *Hamlet* was just such a prince as might be seen in St. James's. *Jane Shore* and *Alicia* came forth in laced stays and hooped petticoats; and, in *Zara*, Miss Young practised the same anachronism; and the representative of *Nerestan*, the Crusader, was dressed in the white uniform of the French Guards; while, at another time, *Cleopatra* appeared in "hooped petticoats, stomacher, and powdered commode, with a richly ornamented fan in her hand!" Although the stage appointments, generally speaking, were at this time conceived in good taste, and on an extravagant scale, little attention appears to have been paid to this point, so essential in aiding the illusion, and carrying the audience back to the time intended to be represented.

Another evil of mischievous tendency, and which must have been an impediment to the working out of the plot, and an obstruction an dintrusion in its progress, was the system of allowing "people of quality" to occupy stage seats, or chairs ranged upon the stage; and in this light it appears at length to have been viewed, for, in 1729, the public resisted it so vigorously that it was thenceforward discontinued.

The general appearance of the theatre and the character of the audience has just been well sketched by Mr. Lawrence, in his "Life of Fielding:"

"The audiences of these days were very differently constituted from those of our own time. When a new

play was produced, the pit was almost entirely filled with critics, who congregated there, and gave the signal for applause or condemnation. The boxes were altogether reserved for the quality—for persons of rank, note, or fashion. The beaux all attended in full dress, and came rather to see and to be seen than to attend to the play. The ladies conducted themselves in the manner described by Fielding in one of his farces ('Miss Lucy in Town'), where a country-bred lady innocently inquires what they do 'at your what-d'ye-call-'em—your plays?' 'Why, if they can,' she is answered, 'they take a stage-box, where they let the footman sit the first two acts to show his livery, then they come in to show themselves, spread their fans upon the spikes, make curtsies to their acquaintance, and then talk and laugh as loud as they are able.' The 'vulgar and indifferent' (Macklin) being excluded from the pit and boxes, found refuge in the lower gallery, where they occasionally amused themselves with cat-calls and other discordant noises."

The footmen were always nuisances at the theatre; while they were "keeping the places" for "the family" they contrived to annoy the whole house.

"The theatre should be esteemed the centre of politeness and good manners, yet numbers of them every evening are lolling over the boxes while they keep places for their masters, with their hats on; play over their airs, take snuff, laugh aloud, adjust their cocks' combs, or hold dialogues with their brethren from one side of the house to the other."—*Weekly Register*, March 25th, 1732.

The fellows, it appears, had got it into their heads that they were entitled to the free entrée of the upper gallery: this had been conceded to them, but they were so clamorous and unruly here, that, in 1737, Fleetwood, manager of



Drury Lane, resisted their usurped privilege, and excluded them. This led to a dreadful riot; they assembled in vast numbers, forced the theatre doors, cut and wounded many persons, and resisted the authorities.

With a pit full of carping critics, boxes full of chattering ladies, and gallery full of "chaffing" footmen, an actor required some nerve to venture on the stage.

At this time the theatres opened at four o'clock: the unhappy Doctor Dodd, in his novel of "The Sisters," published in 1754 (vol. i. page 241), says, "They were at the doors of the theatre before three, and had the high satisfaction to stand there an hour before the doors were opened."

But it was succeeded by another practice, almost as destructive to the effect which the actors sought to produce—the stationing of sentinels at each end of the stage at the theatres royal; a custom which was continued as late as 1763. And as from chairs and seats the managers had got to amphitheatres and erections at the back of the stage, it was, for some time after, the practice to announce on the playbills on a benefit night, "There will be no buildings on the stage."

The announcements of the performances at the several theatres were only given to the public through one chosen organ of the press, as the following notices at two different periods will show :

"The manager of Drury Lane thinks it proper to give notice that advertisements of their plays by their authority are published only in this paper and the *Daily Courant*, and that the publishers of all other papers who presume to insert advertisements of the same plays can do it only by some surreptitious intelligence or hearsay, which frequently leads them to commit gross errors, as mentioning one play

for another, falsely representing the parts, &c., to the misinformation of the town, and the great detriment of the said theatre."—*Daily Post*, 1721.

"To prevent any mistake in future, in advertising the plays and entertainments of Drury Lane Theatre, the managers think it proper to declare that the playbills are inserted by their direction in this paper only."—*Public Advertiser*, January 1st, 1765.

A similar notice from the Covent Garden managers appears in the same paper.

If the curse of political feeling, in its strongest and most fanatical shape, could not be excluded from the coffee-house, the rout, the domestic fireside, or even from the lady's toilette, we cannot expect to find it expelled from the theatre; but our readers will hardly be prepared to hear in what way, and to what extent, partisanship exhibited itself within the playhouse walls. No arrangement of the contending factions in the House of Commons was ever preserved more strictly than the audience of the theatre observed in dividing themselves into the two great parties, the Tory ladies sitting on one side of the house, while the Whig ladies were drawn up on the other side; and we may imagine with what expression each party would cast a side-glance at the other on the delivery of some passage or sentiment which would appear to affect its opinions. The most innocent sentences were tortured into political meaning, and applauded or condemned as they accorded with, or were distasteful to, the respective parties' views. Perhaps no piece was interpreted so satisfactorily to both sides as Addison's "Cato," for, while the Whigs admired it on account of the Whiggish principles of its author, the Tories, on one occasion, actually presented a purse of fifty guineas to Barton Booth, who

played the part of *Cato*, as “a slight acknowledgment of his honest opposition to a perpetual dictator, and in dying so bravely in the cause of liberty.” No doubt this was in part a tribute to the talent of the actor; but the fanciful terms in which it was presented were designed as a “fling” at the opposite party.

The extent to which political sentiments and party clap-traps were introduced upon the stage, furnished Sir Robert Walpole with an excuse for that absurd act for the regulation of theatres, in 1737, which, by requiring the manuscript of a play to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain previously to its representation, virtually established, as we have seen it in our own days, an arbitrary censorship over the drama.

Barring these abuses and venial errors, these were sunny days for the English drama. The distaste for native authors and native actors, and the passion for foreign mountebanks, so angrily ridiculed by Hogarth, were only intermittent, and the royal theatres, “the playhouse in Lincoln’s Inn-fields,” and, latterly, Colman’s and Foote’s “little summer theatre in the Haymarket,” flourished in spite of them. But then, if we had Garicks, Bettertons, Macklins, Riches, Quins, Footes, Booths, and a host of clever delineators to *act* the English drama, what splendid geniuses *wrote* it! There were Addison, Steele, Smollett, Fielding, Gay, Goldsmith, Johnson, Hawkesworth, Thompson, Young, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Inchbald, the Cibbers, the Colmans, the Sheridans, Aaron Hill, Lillo, O’Keefe, Macklin, Hannah More, Charles Shadwell, Motteux, Cumberland, Rowe, D’Urfey, Vanbrugh, Whitehead, Theobald, the latter productions of Congreve, Cowley, Charles Dibdin, William Shirley, George Alexander Steevens, Home, Holcroft, the Careys,



Chatterton, Mrs. Clive, Dodsley, Cobb, Murphy, Allan Ramsay, Kelly—all men of more or less note, writing for the theatres—most of them good in their respective walks—and many of whose dramas are even now brought forward occasionally, but too sparingly, as a choice treat whereon to feast our minds after a surfeit of the modern French trumpery which is hashed up for the stage; Pope, Johnson, Garrick, and Horace Walpole at the same time concocting the prologues and epilogues, down even to Captain Topham; and, notwithstanding the opinion of a critic in the *Weekly Magazine* of 1770, that, instead of the prologue being an outline, and the epilogue a moral application of the drama, they had become “pointed satires of men and manners,” these productions, now rapidly becoming obsolete, display a considerable amount of sparkling wit and sometimes eloquent pathos, and are invaluable to historians of our own modest pretensions, who search no musty record, nor dive into black-letter lore, but skim the lighter literature in which only is to be found the folly, fashion, or rage of which we may want a specimen for our museum.

## CHAPTER XII.

## GAMBLING.

THE idle, the desperate, the sanguine, and the hopeless, the knave and the fool, have been in all generations, and ever will be, gamblers. There is a charm in the uncertainty, the suspense, the speculation, the hazard of gaming, which dazzles the young, and even sometimes attracts the wary. The courtier, the statesman, the general, the stock-jobber, and the merchant, are they not all, in a greater or less degree, gamblers? For riches or honour depend on "how they play their cards"—chance has *something* to do with all their gains and losses.

In the recognised gambling of stock-jobbers every device was resorted to in order to influence the stock-market. False reports, especially during the several wars, were circulated; sham couriers galloped through the streets, spreading uncertainty and mystery over the aspect of affairs; and even on June the 22nd, 1787, we find a woman was arrested at the Royal Exchange, in London, for vending a fictitious *London Gazette Extraordinary*, giving a fabulous account of the movements of the French troops, which caused the funds to fall one per cent.!

But in the more contracted sense in which we understand the word "gambling," our grandsires appear to have

been more attached to it than the generations which went before them. The actor and the politician, the divine and the tradesman, were alike infected with a rage for gaming. The Duke of Devonshire lost his valuable estate of Leicester Abbey to Manners at a game at basset. Peers were impoverished, and estates mortgaged in a single sitting, and the man who had entered the room in a state of affluence, rushed madly into the streets at night penniless, and probably in debt to a large amount. The chocolate-rooms in the neighbourhood of Charing-cross, Leicester-fields, and Golden-square, were the principal "hells" of the West-end, and it was not far for ruin, disgrace, and despair to find oblivion in the bosom of the Serpentine or the Thames. The coffee-houses, we are told, most notorious for gambling, were "White's Chocolate House," for piquet or basset clubs, in 1724;\* "Littleman's," for faro, which was played in every room; "Oldman's," "Tom's," "Will's," and "Jonathan's" Coffee-houses, for ombre, piquet, and loo. About 1730, the "Crown" Coffee-house, in Bedford-row, became the rendezvous of a club of whist players. Early in the century, although Swift mentions it as a clergyman's game, whist appears to have been less in vogue, except with footmen and servants, among whom it kept company with put and all-fours, but it became the rage among all circles in 1742.

"*Du reste*, the town is wondrous dull; operas unfrequented, plays not in fashion, amours as old as marriages—in short, nothing but whist! I have not yet learned to play, but I find that I wait in vain for its being left off."—*Horace Walpole to Sir H. Mann, Dec. 2nd, 1742.*

\* The Earl of Orford declared White's Chocolate House to be "the bane of half the English nobility."



"Whist has spread an universal opium over the whole nation; it makes courtiers and patriots sit down to the same pack of cards."—*The Same to the Same*, Dec. 9th, 1742.

"The Kingdom of the Dull is come upon earth. \* \* \* The only token of this new kingdom is a woman riding on a beast, which is the mother of abominations, and the name on the forehead is Whist; and the four-and-twenty elders, and the woman, and the whole town, do nothing but play with this beast, &c. &c."—*The Same to the Same*, Dec. 23rd, 1742.

From the frequent mention of it in Swift's "Journal to Stella," we should surmise that ombre was in great fashion about 1710 to 1713, as was crimp among the ladies, according to Steele; and, in 1726, we find, in "Gay's Correspondence," a letter to Swift, in which he alludes to the favour in which the game of quadrille was then held: "I can find amusement enough without quadrille, which here is the universal employment of life."

"Nay," cries honest Parson Adams, in the *True Briton* of January the 28th, 1746, "the holy Sabbath is, it seems, prostituted to these wicked revellings, and card-playing goes on as publicly as on any other day! Nor is this only among the young lads and damsels, who might be supposed to know no better, but men advanced in years, and grave matrons, are not ashamed of being caught at the same pastime."

The *Daily Journal* of January the 9th, 1751, gives a list of the officers retained "in the most notorious gaming-houses," showing how these matters were then managed. The first twelve were :

"1. A commissioner, always a proprietor, who looks in

of a night, and the week's account is audited by him and two other proprietors.

"2. A director, who superintends the room.

"3. An operator, who deals the cards at a cheating game called *faro*.

"4. Two croupers (*croupiers*), who watch the cards and gather the money for the bank.

"5. Two puffs, who have money given them to decoy others to play.

"6. A clerk, who is a check upon the puffs, to see that they sink none of the money given them to play with.

"7. A squib is a puff of lower rank, who serves at half-pay salary while he is learning to deal.

"8. A flasher, to swear how often the bank has been stripped.

"9. A dunner, who goes about to recover money lost at play.

"10. A waiter, to fill out wine, snuff candles, and attend the gaming-room.

"11. An attorney—a Newgate solicitor.

"12. A captain, who is to fight any gentleman who is peevish at losing his money."

The green-rooms of the theatres, even, were the scenes of great doings in the gaming way; and Miss Bellamy tells us that thousands were frequently lost there in a night—rings, brooches, watches, professional wardrobes, and even salaries in advance, being staked and lost as well as money.

Horace Walpole's anecdote of White's Chocolate House is so well known, as scarcely to bear repetition: A man dropping down at the door, bets were at once made on the probability of his being dead, and the members grew

furious at a surgeon attempting to bleed him, as it would interfere with the contingencies of the bet!

It was in vain that essays, satires, and sermons were written with a view to checking this universal vice. Hogarth has depicted it in all its horrors, whether in the scene where it first leads the idle apprentice into sin, or in the other, where it shows the young rake the way to gaol. But its dreadful consequences were most forcibly placed before the eyes of the infatuated town by Edward Moore, in a tragedy first performed at Drury Lane in 1753, and entitled the "Gamester." How did "the town" receive this lesson? The "New Theatrical Dictionary" says: "With all its merits, it met with but little success, the general cry against it being that the distress was too deep to be borne. Yet we are rather apt to imagine its want of perfect approbation arose in one part (and that no inconsiderable one) of the audience from a tenderness of another kind than that of compassion, and that they were less hurt by the distress of *Beverley* than by finding their darling vice—their favourite folly—thus vehemently attacked by the strong lance of reason and dramatic execution."

But this absorbing passion was not confined to the harsher sex. Coteries of ladies, young and old, single and married, had their regular nights of meeting; and the household expenses were occasionally not a little increased by the loss, in a single evening, of three times the last night's winnings, which had pacified the husband, or, maybe, been already laid out in a new brocaded dress, stomacher, commode, or fan. Who does not remember the terrible moral contained in the "Lady's Last Stake?" doubtless, when jewels and trinkets had been successively staked and lost, the pearl of greatest value—the most



brilliant ornament of the sex—was in danger. Swift draws a true but satirical picture of this state of things in his “Journal of a Modern Lady;” and Hogarth records the participation of the fair in this engrossing vice, and, in his “Taste in High Life,” we see a complete pyramid, composed of a pack of cards, and on the floor beside them a memorandum, inscribed “Lady Basto, Dr to John Pip, for cards, 300*l*.” Nay, so far did the ladies carry this infatuation, that women of fashion at length *established* in their levees regular whist-masters and professors of quadrille. This was a most distressing feature in the domestic life of the century—the “mothers and wives of England”—(the gentle reformers that they ought to be!)—following the examples of their husbands, or setting them to their children—making their home literally “a hell,” and their unborn children paupers!

If not the earliest, at least the most remarkable instance of this *national* spirit of “gambling” which displayed itself in the last century, was the infatuation which led all classes to commit themselves to the alluring prospects held out to them by the South Sea Company. The public creditor was offered six per cent. interest, and a participation in the profits of a new trading company, incorporated under the style of “The Governor and Company of Merchants of Great Britain trading to the South Seas and other parts of America.” But whatever chances of success this company might have had were soon dispersed by the breaking out of the war with Spain in 1718, which rendered it necessary for the concoctors of the scheme to circulate the most exaggerated reports, falsify their books, bribe the members of the government, and resort to every fraudulent means for the purpose of propping up their tottering creation. Wonderful discoveries of valuable

resources were trumped up, and, by the mystery which they contrived to throw around the whole concern, people's curiosity was excited, and a general but vague impression got abroad that one of the South Sea Company's bonds was talismanic, and there was no reckoning the amount of profit it would bring to the fortunate possessor; the smallest result expected from the enterprise was, that in twenty-six years it would pay off the entire amount of the National Debt!

*How* it was to be done no one knew, or cared to inquire; it was sufficient to know it *was* to be done. Trade and business of all kinds was suspended, every pursuit and calling neglected, and the interest of the whole nation absorbed by this enchanting dream. Money was realised in every way, and at every sacrifice and risk, to be made available in the purchase of South Sea Stock, which rose in price with the demand, from 150*l.* to 325*l.* per cent. Fresh speculators came pouring in, and the price went up to 1000*l.* per cent.! This was at the latter end of July; but lo! a whisper went forth that there was something wrong with the South Sea Company—the chairman, Sir John Blunt, and some of the directors had sold their shares—there was “a screw loose somewhere;” and, on the 2nd of September, it was quoted at 700*l.* An attempt to allay the panic was made by the directors, who called a meeting on the 8th, at Merchant Tailors' Hall, but in the evening it fell to 640*l.*, and, next day, stood at 540*l.* The fever had been succeeded by a shivering fit, and it was rapidly running down to zero! In this emergency the king, who was at Hanover, was sent for, and Sir Robert Walpole called in when the case was desperate. He endeavoured to persuade the Bank of England to circulate the company's bonds, but in vain; the stock fell

to 135*l.*, and the bubble burst. The duration of this public "delirium," as Smollett has truly called it, may be estimated when we state that the bill enabling the company to raise the subscription received the royal assent on the 7th of April, 1720, with the stock at 150*l.*, that the price subsequently ran up to 1000*l.*, and that, on the 29th of September, it had again sunk to 150*l.*, and the delusion was over, and the nation in a state of panic, with public credit shaken to its centre. Investigations were now made into the conduct of the managers of this marvellous fraud. A bill was first passed through parliament to prevent the escape of the directors from the kingdom, and then a committee of secrecy appointed to examine into their accounts. It then came out that books had been destroyed or concealed, entries erased and altered, and accounts falsified; that the king's mistress even, the Duchess of Kendal, had received stock to the amount of 10,000*l.*; another favourite, the Countess of Platen, 10,000*l.*; the Earl of Sutherland, 50,000*l.*; each of the Countess of Platen's two nieces, 10,000*l.*; Mr. Aislaby, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 70,000*l.*; Mr. Craggs, father of the Secretary of State, 659,000*l.*; the Earl of Sunderland, 160,000*l.*; Mr. Craggs, junior, 30,000*l.*; and Mr. Charles Stanhope, Secretary of the Treasury, two amounts, one of 10,000*l.*, and another of 47,000*l.*! The manner in which these worthies, who were in the secret, could anticipate and influence the markets, is obvious. Poor Gay had received an allotment of stock from Mr. Secretary Craggs, which was at one time worth 20,000*l.*; but he clung fast to the bubble, refused to sell at that price, and waited till it was worthless, when he found himself hugging the shadow of a fortune! The amount of the company's stock at the time of the inquiry was found to be



37,800,000*l.*, of which 24,500,000*l.* belonged to individual proprietors. As some compensation to these rash and ruined speculators, the estates of the directors were confiscated. Sir George Caswell was expelled the House of Commons, and made to disgorge 250,000*l.*; Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was expelled, and committed to the Tower; Sir John Blunt, the chairman, was stripped of all but 5000*l.*; and Sir John Fellowes was deprived of 233,000*l.*; and the excitement and popular resentment was so intense, that it is marvellous that they escaped with their lives.

The South Sea frenzy was not sufficient to engross the gambling spirit that it had generated; simultaneously there oozed up a crowd of smaller bubbles, of which Malcolm counted one hundred and fifty-six. The titles of some of them were sufficient to illustrate the madness which had seized upon the nation!

“Companies for carrying on the undertaking business and furnishing funerals, capital 1,200,000*l.*, at the Fleece Tavern” (ominous sign!), “Cornhill—for discounting pensions, 2000 shares, at the Globe Tavern—for preventing and suppressing thieves, and insuring all persons’ goods from the same (!), capital 2,000,000*l.*, at Cooper’s—for making of Joppa and Castile soap, at the Castle Tavern—for sweeping the streets—for maintaining bastard children—for improving gardens and raising fruit-trees, at Garraway’s—for insuring horses against natural death, accident, or theft, at the Crown Tavern, Smithfield—another at Robin’s, of the same nature, capital 2,000,000*l.*—for introducing the breed of asses (!)—an insurance company against the thefts of servants, 3000 shares, of 1000*l.* each, at the Devil Tavern—for a perpetual motion, by means of a wheel moving by force of its own weight,

capital 1,000,000*l.*, at the Ship Tavern—for assurance of seamen's wages—for insuring and increasing children's fortunes—for making looking-glasses—for improving malt liquors—for planting of mulberry-trees and breeding of silkworms in Chelsea Park—for fattening of hogs—for discovering the land of Ophir, &c., &c."

The shares of the Water Engine Company, with 4*l.* paid, sold for 50*l.*—of the Stocking Company, with 2*l.* 10*s.* paid, for 30*l.*—of the Company for Manuring of Land, with 2*s.* 6*d.* paid, for 1*l.* 10*s.* The Prince of Wales became governor of a Welsh Copper Company; the Duke of Chandos was chairman of the York-buildings Company, and of another company for building houses in London and Westminster.

Many of these speculations were jealously prosecuted by the South Sea Company, but they all succeeded, in a greater or less degree, in spreading the general panic. The amount of capital proposed to be raised by these countless schemes was three hundred millions sterling—exceeding the value of all the lands in England! The most amusing instance of the blind credulity of the public was in the success which attended one wily projector, who, well knowing the value of mystery, published the following proposal:

"This day, the 8th instant, at Sam's Coffee-house, behind the Royal Exchange, at three in the afternoon, a book will be opened for entering into a joint co-partnership for carrying on a thing that will turn to the advantage of all concerned."

The particulars of this notable scheme were not to be revealed for a month, and, "in the mean time," says Smollett, "he declared that every person paying two guineas should be entitled to a subscription of one hun-

dred pounds, which would produce that sum yearly. In one forenoon the adventurer received a thousand of these subscriptions, and, in the evening, set out for another kingdom!"

Some curious satires of these several schemes are preserved in the British Museum, in the shape of a pack of playing-cards. Thus, one is a caricature of York-buildings, with the following lines beneath it:

You that are blest with wealth by your Creator,  
And want to drown your money in Thames water,  
Buy but York-buildings, and the cistern there  
Will sink more pence than any fool can spare.

A ship-building company is thus ridiculed:

Who but a nest of blockheads to their cost  
Would build new ships for freight when trade is lost?  
To raise fresh barques must surely be amusing,  
When hundreds rot in dock for want of using.

The Pennsylvanian Land Company comes in for a share of the satire:

Come, all ye saints, that would for little buy  
Great tracts of land, and care not where they lie,  
Deal with your Quaking friends—they're men of light—  
The spirit hates deceit and scorns to bite.

The Company for the Insurance of Horses' Lives against Death or Accident is thus dealt with:

You that keep horses to preserve your ease,  
And pads to please your wives and mistresses,  
Insure their lives, and, if they die we'll make  
Full satisfaction—or *be bound to break!*

Smollett gives us a more dismal picture. "The whole nation," he says, "was infested with the spirit of stock-jobbing to an astonishing degree. All distinctions of party, religion, sex, character, and circumstances were



swallowed up. Exchange-alley was filled with a strange concourse of statesmen and clergymen, churchmen and dissenters, Whigs and Tories, physicians, lawyers, tradesmen, and even with females; all other professions and employments were utterly neglected."

In this state of the public feeling, it is not to be wondered at that lottery schemes were received with favour, when the government were forced to resort to them as a means of raising the supplies; but what is remarkable, is the amount of superstition which was connected with the working of them. The chance of a twenty or thirty thousand pound prize was too dazzling, and the tickets were bought up almost as soon as they were issued; nay, scarcely had "the scheme" of the "New State Lottery" made its appearance in the *London Gazette*, before the offices of the agents and contractors to whom the distribution of the tickets fell, were besieged by impatient applicants; for, as Fielding says in his farce of the "Lottery,"

A lottery is a taxation  
Upon all the fools in creation;  
And Heaven be prais'd,  
It is easily raised—  
Credulity's always in fashion.

The rage for a "ticket in the lottery" was a species of monomania with which few people were not infected, from the nobleman who could afford to purchase a whole ticket, to the servant who raised the sum (often, as has been proved, by pilfering) necessary to purchase a sixteenth. Long and serious was the consideration in the choice of an agent. "Hazard" was a famous name; nay, "Winpenny" was better, and his office was the King's Arms, Saint Dunstan's Church: he had sold the twenty thousand prize in the last lottery (and our speculator never

paused to think that this very fact would reduce the amount of probability of his selling one in the present); but then "Goodluck"—that had a more musical sound! The case was perplexing, and the anxious speculator long wavered in doubt and hesitation, till a bill is, perchance, thrust into his hand with some doggerel song, ending in such a chorus as—

For oh! 'tis *Bish*, 'tis BISH, 'tis BISH,  
Who sends the cash around;  
I only wish a friend in Bish,  
And thirty thousand pound!

or a glance at the long list of "Prizes sold by Bish!!!" in former lotteries decides his choice, and to Bish's office accordingly he hies. But now interposes another momentous question—What number shall he choose? Three is lucky—so is twelve—seven is decidedly unlucky: there must not be a seven in the number, nor must it be divisible by seven; no, it shall be twelve, or one of the multiples of twelve;—or he will consult a friend, who has been fortunate in his former selections: he chose Gideon Goose's number for him, and it was a prize; he advised Tom Fool in his purchase, and it turned up a thousand pounds;—yes, he would seek his lucky friend, and have his opinion as to the number likely to win the grand prize. Such was the usual manner of fixing upon a number in the choice of a lottery-ticket; but occasionally a fortune-teller was consulted, and the figures which she pretended to discern—and which the credulity of her dupe readily pointed out—in the grounds of coffee or the formation of the fire, were instantly noted down, and the ticket whose number corresponded with them anxiously secured, even at a heavy premium; or, as was the cant term for buying a ticket, "the horse" was "hired." This is no exaggerated

picture; the recollection even of many who may read these pages will testify to its truth (for lotteries lingered into the present century). The superstition and credulity of lottery speculators were truly ridiculous. A squinting woman, auguring ill-luck, was the most hideous demon they could encounter; whilst a man, labouring under the same obliquity of vision, and who was supposed to import good fortune, became a very angel in their eyes. Dreams were held of marvellous account; but, if a crumb fell from the table, or but a grain of salt were spilled on the morning of "the drawing," what losses did it not portend!

But the eventful day which was to decide the fortunes of thousands—the question of life or death to many—pregnant with joy and misery, success and disappointment—now approaches, and the sanguine holder of a lottery-ticket, already the confident possessor of a prize of twenty thousand pounds, disdains to walk to the scene of his anticipated triumph, and hires a hackney-coach from the nearest stand, or perhaps a brass-nailed leather chair, to carry him to Guildhall. What! walk? He, the holder of a ticket which will soon be drawn a prize! Psha! "Coach! coach! To Guildhall—as fast as you like!" No quibbling about the fare—there is no occasion for economy *now*; the only consideration is speed, for the speculator is impatient to grasp his coming fortune. How crowded is the old hall with anxious faces—some beaming with hope; others betraying a mixed sensation, half hope, half fear; others, again, bent seriously on the ground, their owners wondering, evidently, when the drawing will commence—when their respective numbers will be drawn—what they will be, prizes or blanks; if prizes, of what amount; if blanks—— See! the sleeves of the Bluecoat-boy, who is to draw the numbers, are



turned up at the wrist. And why is this? To prevent his concealing, as he was once suspected of doing, a prize beneath his cuff. And now the wheel revolves—a prize is drawn! What number? Hush! Silence there! Ha! is it possible? Yes, yonder buxom servant, whose countenance has been changing alternately from white to red, is the happy possessor of twelve hundred pounds, a sixteenth of the prize. That babe, who is fretting and screaming in its mother's arms, is the all-unconscious owner of another portion—and a long history the proud mother has to tell to the surrounding crowd of that same screaming babe: how that she had purchased the share with the money she had saved up when “in service”—how she had held him forth, and allowed his tiny hand—oh, bless it!—to dive among the numbers—and how he drew forth from among the mass—bless his little heart! he did—the identical one that had obtained the prize; and, as he kicks and frets in the oppressive heat of the hall, what an innocent accessory does he seem to have been to his own fortune! But, hark! something withdraws the attention of her audience: a buzz had recommenced at the upper end of the hall, but now everything is hushed. Once more the wheel of fortune flies round, and this time is drawn—a blank! Note yonder man, who has been straining and stretching his neck to see the number exhibited, or hear it pronounced—he is the possessor of the ticket. Poor fellow! Mark his countenance—how the ray of hope which had previously illumined it disappears! This was his last attempt; for years he had been hoarding up a little money for a risk in this lottery, and had invested it in an entire ticket, and now he has lost it all. For himself he cares not: *his* days cannot be very many more, and the workhouse is open to *him*; but it was for

his orphan grandchild—to support her when he was gone, to keep her from the streets and wretchedness. Poor fellow! He buries his face in his hands, but dare not think of home. Rich peer, who standest by his side, and hast come merely for amusement and to see the drawing, a score of pounds taken from your great store would not be missed—take pity on the wretch, and save, oh! save the child! Equally unsuccessful have been all his former attempts: he feels that he is doomed. And this, which had been the constant theme of his conversation and the subject of his thoughts by day, and the substance of his dreams by night, when, awaking, he had fondled the child, and, calling it by endearing names, cried in his maddening hopefulness, “You shall ride in a carriage, Nelly—you shall be rich, Nelly, and keep your poor old grandfather!”—this, for which he had denied himself the few luxuries which his scanty means would have enabled him to enjoy, and perhaps, even, robbed Nature of her due—this, for which he had at last sacrificed his self-respect, and carried his long-preserved and carefully-cherished wedding-suit to the pawnbroker’s—this, for the issue of which he had induced his importunate and clamorous creditors to wait,—this last chance lost, his last hope went with it. There was now nothing before him but the workhouse or the gaol. Stay! Yes, there was—the river! For the poor little orphan at home—lost child!—the carriage never came!

Frightful evils grew out of these State lotteries; in many cases they rendered the unfortunate speculator a maniac and a suicide—in many more they encouraged dishonesty and crime. In 1754, the agents and their friends, it was discovered, were in the habit of monopolising the tickets by means of using various false names—

although the Lottery Act specially prohibited any one person from holding more than twenty tickets—and carried this system on to such an extent, defaulting if unsuccessful, and causing serious deficiencies in the revenue, that a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the evil; and one man, on its suggestion, was prosecuted in the Court of King's Bench, and fined a thousand pounds. Neither were these agents considered by the public immaculate or incapable of cheating their infatuated customers, for, in 1774, Hazard and Co. advertise that they have made an affidavit before the Lord Mayor that *they will “justly and honestly pay the prizes”*—an assurance, intended to inspire confidence, which hints significantly at the existence of distrust.

But the agents were sometimes victimised themselves by a class of adventurers yet more cunning and unscrupulous. Several of the “lottery-office keepers” as they were called, had a small room at the back of their shops, in which they pursued the lucrative business of “insuring numbers.” Thus, a person having a superstitious prejudice in favour of any particular number, but without the means sufficient to purchase the ticket of the corresponding number, would, on payment of a shilling to the agent, effect an insurance on it, by which, in the event of its being drawn a prize, he would receive the amount for which he might have insured it. This betting practice (for such it was),—which, in fact, formed a lottery on a smaller scale—was strictly prohibited by the government, as it superseded in some degree the purchase of tickets. The consequence was, that these illicit proceedings were carried on in a surreptitious manner, the door being secured against intruders before the agent would enter upon the business of insurance. To practise



a fraud upon these insurers was excusable, and tolerably safe, seeing that they had no redress at law. Persons were in the habit of attending the drawing of the lotteries, which usually took place at about eight o'clock in the evening, and posting their agents along the shortest cut to the insurance-office, the instant a prize was drawn a messenger was sent to communicate the number of it to the first of these living telegraphs, or, as they were popularly called, "carrier pigeons." The information was rapidly conveyed along the line till it reached the last, who forthwith rushed to the office and insured the number heavily; in a few minutes the insurer received intelligence by some less rapid mode of communication that it was a prize, and the sum insured was accordingly the booty of the party insured and his accomplices. To guard against this fraud, the keepers of the insurance-offices subsequently closed their doors as soon as the drawing of the lottery had commenced; but even then they were cheated, for the number of a prize just drawn has been thrust through the keyhole and received unnoticed by one of the crowd who was waiting inside the office, under lock and key, to insure.

The keeper of one of these offices is made to say, in a farce written in 1781, and entitled "The Temple of Fortune :—" "Bolt the door, for it grows near nine o'clock, and mind that no one stands near the door, as a carrier pigeon may fly through the keyhole, for such things have been known." From the same farce, it would appear that the lottery-office keepers would sometimes sell a number twice over, for, on a Frenchman applying for No. 45, the keeper says, aside, after selling it to him, "That was drawn yesterday, by-the-by, but he will have nearly as good a chance with that as any other."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## DUELLING.

THERE were many circumstances which tended to make duels more frequent in the last century than they are at present. The inefficiency of the watch, the unlighted state of the streets, the proximity of fields and secluded places to the city and west-end, the fashion of wearing swords and hangers, the immoderate taste for gambling, the practice of drinking deeply, even in good society, the violence and acrimony of political feeling, the frequency of intrigues and amours in fashionable life—all, doubtless, contributed to swell the list of murders which were perpetrated under the name of duels.

Did the stranger who sat opposite to you in the coffee-house differ from you in opinion ; did the blacklegs, with whom you had just lost a few thousands at faro, after cozening you out of your estate, jeer you upon venturing no more ; did your friend refuse to acknowledge the supremacy of your mistress over his, there was no other remedy than a duel, and a duel was accordingly “got up,” and fought—frequently in the room, even, where the dispute arose—as in the following instance, which we copy from a newspaper of 1710 :

“As Mr. C—— was yesterday passing the Adelphi

coffee-house, he was met by Mr. L——, with whom he had a slight dispute the day before, in which some offensive words had been used. Mr. C—— dragged him into the coffee-room, and, locking the door, handed him a loaded pistol, and pointing one himself, desired him to fire. The pistols being discharged without effect, Mr. C—— drew his sword, and called on Mr. L—— to defend himself; but the report of the pistols and the clashing of the weapons attracting the attention of a club which was assembled in the adjoining room, the door was broken open, and the combatants were separated without further injury."

The peculiar notions of the age rendered a duel almost a necessary resentment of an affront, punishment of an injury, or settlement of a dispute. What says Dr. Johnson? "He, then, who fights a duel does not fight from passion against his antagonist, but out of self-defence, to avert the stigma of the world, and to prevent himself from being driven out of society. I could wish there were not that superfluity of sentiment, but while such notions prevail, no doubt a man may lawfully fight a duel." Here, then, we have the least chivalrous of philosophers giving a specious justification of this barbarous practice, and allowing the lawfulness of murder when it was necessary to preserve a man's station in society!

A duel at this time was "open to persons of limited means," as the advertisements would say. There was no outlay required in the purchase of hair-triggered pistols; no expensive trip to Wimbledon Common or Wormwood Scrubs. A sword was always ready at hand, and the green fields and retired lanes were close to Charing-cross; and an angry partisan, a ruined gamester, or a heated bacchanalian, was converted into a mutilated corpse in



less time than is now occupied in choosing a place of rendezvous. A half-pay officer, or a retired captain who "had a taste that way," although frequently a stranger to both the parties concerned, would always come forward to offer his services to either of them as second, and while the drowsy watchman was slumbering on his post, a mortal wound was often given and received in this way in the very streets of London.

A duel was not of much use even to the penny-a-liner—it was too common an event. Each paltry squabble was decided by a duel; every frivolous dispute was followed by a combat; and the persons who had been discussing some political question in the coffee-room, staking their property at the gaming-table, or toasting their respective mistresses at the banquet, scarcely considered their discussion, or their game, or their evening's amusement concluded until they had "crossed swords" in the nearest meadow. Can we look through a single novel written in the eighteenth century, and illustrating its manners, without finding at least a brace of duels in it? It was the fashion for friends to run each other through the body, and the occurrence was, *perhaps*, reported in the papers next day (perhaps not noticed at all)—not as it would be now-a-days, headed "Horrible Tragedy!" and emblazoned in large type and garnished with notes of exclamation, but concisely stated as a matter of ordinary occurrence, to the effect that Mr. So-and-so and Mr. Such-a-one, having had an altercation respecting a celebrated toast, they had fought in Such-and-such fields, when Mr. Such-a-one was mortally wounded by a thrust from his adversary's sword. What, for instance, can read colder or tamer than the following paragraph from the "Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer" of the *London Magazine* of August, 1735?—

"*Thursday, 7th.*—About six this morning a duel was fought near the Horse Guard-house, at Kensington, between James Lee, of the county of Salop, Esq., and Jonathan Andrews, Esq., an ensign in Colonel Reed's regiment of foot at Gibraltar; when, after several passes, the former received a slight wound in his left breast, and the other was run through his body, and died on the spot. Mr. Andrews gave the challenge, and they fought at first in the Privy Garden; but Mr. Lee's sword being broke, they were parted, and went home to their lodgings, which was in the same house. Mr. Andrews would not rest, but challenged him again, and so met his fate."

A more amusing report in the *Westminster Journal* of February the 19th, 1774, shows how general was the resort to weapons offensive among all classes to settle disputes; but, in this case, we have the pistol elected umpire instead of the sword:

"Wednesday a duel was fought behind Montague House, between two journeymen lace-weavers. The combatants entered the field, accompanied by their seconds, when, the usual ceremonies being gone through, one of the parties discharged his pistol, the ball from which took away part of the sleeve of his antagonist's coat; and then, like a man of courage, without waiting for the fire being returned, made the best of his way off the field. The quarrel began at a public-house, about the mode of cooking a dish of sprats, one insisting on having them fried, and the other on having them broiled. With the assistance of some friends, the sum of three shillings was raised to procure the use of pistols to decide this important contest. To such a pitch is the most honourable profession of duelling arrived!"

Verily we should think these worthy weavers had

“other fish to fry” than to get into a broil suited only to their betters! Such disputes as these, got up in such a way, in such a place, and on such a subject, might naturally be considered deserving such a mode of adjustment, and society could have spared either of the two fools engaged in this rencontre. But such valuable lives as Sheridan’s, Fox’s, Pitt’s, Wilkes’s, Kemble’s, and Castlereagh’s were more than once jeopardised in the same foolish manner. In fact, there was scarcely, we should say, a single man of the century who had made himself eminent in letters, arts, science, or politics, who had not fought his one or more duels.

These weavers had selected the aristocratic duel grounds “behind Montague House,” which, together with Hyde Park, were the general scenes of rencontres in high life. In the latter, the Duke of Hamilton and the infamous Lord Mohun fought and fell; and the seconds, Hamilton and Macartney, were wounded, in the memorable duel of November, 1712 (fought in the presence of many unmoved spectators), of which Swift writes to Stella: “The duke was helped to the Cake-house, by the ring in Hyde Park, where they fought, and died on the grass before they could reach the house.”

But these “ceremonious duels,” as a modern writer says, with a levity hardly consistent with the subject, “to which men were formally invited some time beforehand, and in which more guests than two participated,” were scarcely of more frequent occurrence than the “off-hand duels—impromptu exertions of that species of lively humour.”

“Horace Walpole, senior, quarrelled with a gentleman in the House of Commons, and they fought at the stair foot. Lord Byron and Mr. Chaworth stepped out of a



dining-parlour in the 'Star and Garter' Tavern, in Pall Mall, and fought by the light of a bedroom candle in an adjoining apartment. More than one duel occurred in Pall Mall itself."

So says—and says truly—Charles Knight, in that delightful collection of anecdotes and historical facts relating to past and present "London."

Many a high-minded and honourable man fell in as paltry a quarrel as could be conceived. Much noble blood soaked into the fields of Islington and Pancras in a miserable cause; an idle word, a hasty censure, a thoughtless jest, must all be blotted out in blood! And, although the blood that was shed was sufficient to wash away the words that had provoked it, they still remained unrefuted. Courage of this sort, foolhardiness, recklessness, or mere bombast, could neither sustain a falsehood nor support a truth!

## CHAPTER XIV.

## STATE OF THE ROADS.

It may be as well to prepare the reader's mind for a description of the perils of the country roads, by first inquiring what was the condition of the streets of London. Gay assists us in forming a tolerable estimate of their appearance. It was only in the leading thoroughfares that the passengers were protected from the waggons and cars by ranges of stout posts, which left barely room for two persons to pass abreast, and in some instances, where the eccentric architecture of the houses had placed some abutments upon the path, there was scarcely room for one. The path, so formed, was none of the best; the water-spouts discharged a torrent of water, in rainy weather, from the projecting eaves upon the heads of the passers-by (for umbrellas it was considered outlandish and effeminate to carry until the century had passed its third quarter), while the stones under their feet were so rough and uneven, that, as Gay assures us,

Each stone will wrench th' unwary step aside.

Outside the posts it was not safe to venture:

Though expedition bids, yet never stray  
 Where no ranged posts defend the rugged way,  
 Here laden carts with thundering waggons meet,  
 Wheels clash with wheels, and bar the narrow street.

Such confusion is not witnessed in all the increased traffic of modern London; the roadways are wider, better paved and drained, and better regulations are enforced, and the vehicles themselves are of a less lumbering construction; so that such an accident as Gay describes is not of every-day occurrence in *all* its horrors:

I've seen a beau, in some ill-fated hour,  
 When o'er the stones chok'd kennels swell the shower,  
 In gilded chariot loll; he with disdain  
 Views spatter'd passengers all drenched in rain.  
 With mud fill'd high the rumbling cart draws near—  
 Now rule thy prancing steeds, laced charioteer!  
 The dustman lashes on with spiteful rage,  
 His ponderous spokes thy painted wheel engage;  
 Crush'd is thy pride—down falls the shrieking beau—  
 The slabby pavement crystal fragments strew;  
 Black floods of mire th' embroidered coat disgrace,  
 And mud enwraps the honours of his face.

The coaches, too, often got “set” in the “channels” that ran down the middle of the streets; but a still worse danger was the unguarded excavation, or unlighted heap of stones,

Where a dim gleam the paly lantern throws  
 O'er the mid pavement, heapy rubbish grows,  
 Or arched vaults their gaping jaws extend,  
 Or the dark caves to common sewers descend.  
 Oft, by the winds extinct, the signal lies,  
 Or, smothered in the glimmering socket, dies,  
 Ere night has half roll'd round her ebon throne;  
 In the wide gulf, the shatter'd coach o'erthrown  
 Sinks with the snorting steeds; the reins are broke,  
 And from the crackling axle flies the spoke.

A pleasant picture, truly! But it was not exaggerated: Smith, in his “History of Westminster,” says that, in



Saint Margaret's-street, pales were "placed, four feet high, between the footpath and coach-road, to preserve the passengers from injury, and from being covered with the mud, which was splashed on all sides in abundance;" and, up till 1750, the ways to the Houses of Parliament "were in so miserable a state, that fagots were thrown into the ruts on the days in which the king went to Parliament, to render the passage of the state coach more easy."

If such were the state of the streets of the metropolis, our readers will be curious to know what was the state of the country roads. Fortunately we are enabled to gratify that curiosity, by quoting a complete survey of the roads made by Arthur Young, the agriculturist, in 1767; but, as there had, no doubt, even then, been great improvements effected in them, we will mention some circumstances which will throw a little light upon their condition in the earlier part of the century.

In December, 1703, Charles III., King of Spain, slept at Petworth, on his way from Portsmouth to Windsor, and Prince George of Denmark went to meet him there, by desire of the queen. In the narrative of the journey given by one of the prince's attendants, we find the following curious particulars :

"We set out at six in the morning, by torchlight, to go to Petworth, and did not get out of the coaches (*save only when we were overturned, or stuck fast in the mire*) till we arrived at our journey's end. 'Twas a hard service for the prince to sit fourteen hours in the coach that day, without eating anything, and passing through the worst ways I ever saw in my life. We were thrown but once indeed in going, but our coach—which was the leading one—and his highness's body coach would have suffered

very much, if the nimble boors of Sussex had not *frequently poised it or supported it with their shoulders* from Godalming almost to Petworth ; and the nearer we approached the duke's (Somerset) house the more inaccessible it seemed to be. *The last nine miles of the way cost us six hours to conquer them ;* and, indeed, we had never done it if our good master had not several times lent us a pair of horses out of his own coach, whereby we were enabled to trace out the way for him." On the next morning they returned from Petworth, by way of Guildford, to Windsor. But the attendant writes : "I saw him (the prince) no more till I found him at supper at Windsor, for there we were overturned (*as we had been once before the same morning*), and broke our coach. My Lord Delaware had the same fate, *and so had several others.*"

This same road, from Petworth to Guildford, appears to have continued in this condition for some time after King Charles and Prince George of Denmark floundered through it, for, in the *Courier* newspaper of September the 10th, 1824, we find the following anecdote :

"In the time of Charles (surnamed the Proud), Duke of Somerset, who died in 1748, the roads in Sussex were in so bad a state that, in order to arrive at Guildford from Petworth, travellers were obliged to make for the nearest point of the great road leading from Portsmouth to London. This was a work of so much difficulty as to occupy the whole day, and the duke had a house at Guildford, which was regularly used as a resting-place for the night by any of his family travelling to London. A manuscript letter from the servant of the duke, dated from London, and addressed to another at Petworth, acquaints the latter that his grace intended to go from London

thither on a certain day, and directs that 'the keepers and persons who knew the holes and the sloughs must come to meet his grace with lanthorns and long poles, to help him on his way.'"

In 1726, Pope was upset only a mile from Twickenham, as he returned from Lord Bolingbroke's house at Dowley, in his lordship's coach-and-six, when, finding the bridge at Whitton broken down, he had to pass through the river, and the coach setting in a hole was overturned, and Pope "had like to have been drowned," as one of his friends writes in the peculiar phrase of the times.

But, to return once more to the Sussex roads. Daniel De Foe, giving an account of his travels, under the title of "A Tour through Great Britain," by a Gentleman (London, 1724), mentions in vol. i. (page 54, letter ii.) the following anecdotes, *apropos* of the roads of Sussex, in speaking of the "prodigious timber" of the county :

"Sometimes I have seen one tree on a carriage which they call here a tug, drawn by two-and-twenty oxen; and, even then, this carried so little a way, and then thrown down and left for other tugs to take up and carry on, that sometimes it is two or three years before it gets to Chatham; for, if once the rains come in, it stirs no more that year, and sometimes a whole summer is not dry enough to make the roads passable."

And again :

"Going to church at a country village not far from Lewes, I saw an ancient lady—and a lady of very good quality, I assure you—drawn to church in her coach with six oxen; nor was it done in frolic or humour, but mere necessity, the way being so stiff and deep that no horses could go in it."

But a more general estimate may be formed from the



accounts left by Arthur Young. His tour, which, as we have stated, was made in 1767, occupied six weeks, and comprehended all the central counties of England, starting from Norfolk and traversing Suffolk, Essex, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire. The work, containing a description of this tour in a series of letters, is full of curious agricultural and statistical information, and incidentally valuable, as containing an account of the turnpike roads at that period. The edition we are about to quote from is entitled "A Six Weeks' Tour through the Southern Counties of England and Wales," in one volume octavo. "London: Printed for William Nicholl, at the Paper Mill in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1768."

From among his miscellaneous remarks we pick out the following passages, which lie scattered through the volume, in allusion to the state of the several roads over which he passed. The only ones of which he could give anything like a favourable report, appear to have been "that from Salisbury to the other side of Winchester," "the Great North-road to Barnet," "the Kentish-road," the roads to Chelmsford in Essex, and to Uxbridge, and "the eighteen miles of finished road from Cowbridge, in Glamorganshire, to six miles on this side Cardiff;" but, "as to all the rest, it is a prostitution of language to call them turnpikes. I rank them nearly in the same class with the dark lanes from Billericay to Tilbury Fort. Among the bad ones, however, some parts of the road from Tetsford to Gloucester are much better than the unmended parts from Gloucester to the good road above mentioned. The latter is all terrible; much more to be condemned is the execrable muddy road from Bury to Sudbury, in which I

was forced to move as slow as in any unmended lane in Wales, for ponds of liquid dirt, and a scattering of loose flints, just sufficient to lame every horse that moves near them. As to Norfolk and her natural roads, the boast of the inhabitants, who repeat with vanity the saying of Charles II., all that I have to remark is, that I know not one mile of excellent road in the whole county." (Pages 248 to 251.)

Of the road from Billericay to Tilbury Fort, which our author seems to have borne painfully in mind, he speaks in hearty disgust:

"Of all the cursed roads that ever disgraced this kingdom in the very ages of barbarism, none ever equalled that from Billericay to the King's Head at Tilbury. It is for near ten miles so narrow that a mouse cannot pass by any carriage. I saw a fellow creep under his waggon to assist me to lift, if possible, my chaise over a hedge. The ruts are of an incredible depth, and a pavement of diamonds might as well be sought for as a quarter. The trees everywhere overgrow the road, so that it is totally impervious to the sun except at a few places. And, to add to the infamous circumstances that continually occur to plague a traveller, I must not forget the eternally meeting with chalk waggons, themselves frequently stuck fast, till a collection of them are in the same situation, and twenty or thirty horses may be tacked to each other, to draw them out one by one. After this description, will you, can you, believe me when I tell you that a turnpike was much solicited for by some gentlemen, to lead from Chelmsford to the fort at Tilbury Fort, but opposed by the bruises of this country, whose horses are torn in pieces with bringing chalk through these vile roads; and yet in this tract are found farmers who cultivate above a thou-

sand (pounds) a year, but are perfectly contented with their roads." (Pages 72 and 73.)

Pardoning what sounds like a Jonathanism of the eighteenth century, that the loose flints on the Sudbury road were sufficient to lame "every horse that moves *near them*," the assertion that on the Tilbury road "a mouse cannot pass by any carriage," is pretty well borne out by the fact that the waggoner whom our traveller met could not pass by his own, but had to creep under it in order to reach him, and help him with his chaise over a hedge while the cart went by. It must have been, we may presume, no wider for some considerable distance either way, otherwise one of the vehicles would have been backed out, and the desperate alternative had recourse to might have been obviated. From his ridicule of the short-sightedness of "the bruises of the country," it would appear that Essex deserved in the eighteenth the reputation it enjoys in the nineteenth century, of being the Boeotia of England; and that the "Essex calves" were as adverse to improvement, and as ignorant and indifferent, then as now.

But our author has not yet done with Essex:

"I found upon a journey I took from this place" (Chelmsford) "to Bury, that the road to Hedingham is excessive bad; and from Sudbury to within two miles of Bury still worse. Their method of mending the last-mentioned road I found excessively absurd; for, in nine parts out of ten, the sides are higher than the middle; and the gravel they bring in is nothing but a yellow loam with a few stones in it, through which the wheels of a light chaise cut as easily as in sand, with the addition of such floods of watery mud as render this road on the whole inferior"



(query, superior?) "to nothing but an unmended Welsh lane." (Page 211.)

But we must not allow our traveller to expose the whole truth about the Essex men and their roads—it would be too unkind; besides, they are pretty well known and estimated at the present day. Let us hear what he has to say of the roads in the other home counties—of Buckinghamshire, for example:

"From Wycombe to Stoke the turnpike road declined greatly; insomuch that I could scarcely believe myself in one, for, near Tetford, they mend entirely of stone dug out of the hills, which are like quarries, and are in large flakes, so that in those places that are just mended the horse hobbles over them as if afraid of breaking his legs." (Page 88.)

"So much for Buckingham." Oxfordshire has no better roads; they seem to have been, in fact, much worse:

"The road" (from Tetford to Oxford) "is called, by a vile prostitution of language, a turnpike, but christened, I apprehend, by people who know not what a road is. It is all of chalk-stones, of which loose ones are everywhere rolling about to lame the horses. It is full of holes and ruts, very deep, and withal so narrow, that I with difficulty got my chair out of the way of the Witney waggons and various machines perpetually passing. The tolls are very dear, and vilely unreasonable, considering the badness of the roads." (Page 90.) . . . . "This road" (from Witney to North Leach) "is, I think, the worst turnpike I ever travelled in—so bad that it is a scandal to the country. They mend and make with nothing but the stone, which forms the understratum, all over, quite from

Tetford to the other side of Oxford. This stone, which rises in vast flakes, would make an admirable foundation for a surface of gravel, but, by using it alone and in pieces as large as one's head, the road is rendered most execrable." (Page 101.)

We cannot wonder at the frequency of such accidents as the escort of Prince George of Denmark met with, on such roads as these, where the chaise-wheels had to roll over stones "as large as one's head"—we can only wonder how the horses ever got over them. Here is another splendid road in Gloucestershire:

"I was infinitely surprised to find the same stony, hard, rough, and cursed roads, miscalled turnpikes, all the way from Gloucester to Newnham, which is twelve miles. It is all a narrow lane, and most infamously stony. It is the same stone as the other side of the Severn, but much harder, and, consequently, more jolting and cutting to the horses' feet: nor is it so much a level, but ruts all the way." (Page 111.)

It is quite a relief to hear that there *was* a good road in England at this time, after one has made his head and bones ache with the mere contemplation of these horrors. Here is one running through parts of Wiltshire and Hampshire:

"The road from Salisbury to Romsey, and the first four miles from thence to Winchester, I found so remarkably good that I made particular inquiries concerning their making and mending it. It is many miles as level, as firm, and as free from loose stones as the finest garden-walk I ever beheld, and yet the traffic on it is very great by waggons, but scarcely the print of a wheel to be seen, and I really believe there was not a loose stone to make a horse stumble nineteen miles from Salisbury." (Page 172.)

But as he approached Wales, the hills began to trouble him:

"From Newnham to Chepstow, the road continues excessively stony, and made in the same vile manner as that from Gloucester. In many places the road is so very narrow, that my chaise with difficulty got through it without rising on the banks. There is one circumstance which would render the best turnpike in England extremely bad to travel, and that is the perpetual hills, for you will form a clear idea of them if you suppose the" (face of the) "country to represent the roofs of houses joined, and the road to run across them." (Page 113.) . . . "But, my dear sir, what am I to say to the roads in this country—the turnpikes, as they have the assurance to call them, and the hardness to make one pay for? From Chepstow to the half-way house, between Newport and Cardiff, they continue mere rocky lanes, full of hugeous stones as big as one's horse, and abominable holes. The first from Newport were so detestable, without either direction-posts or mile-stones, that I could not persuade myself that I was on a turnpike, but had mistook the road, and therefore asked every one I met, who answered, to my astonishment, 'Ye-as.'" (Pages 120 and 121.)

In another edition of his Tour, in which he describes the state of the road between Preston and Wigan, in 1770, he cannot restrain his anger:

"I know not, in the whole range of language, terms sufficiently expressive to describe this *infernal highway*. Let me most seriously caution all travellers who may accidentally propose to travel this terrible country, *to avoid it as they would the devil*, for a thousand to one but they break their necks or their limbs by overthrows or breakings down. They will here meet with ruts which I ac-



tually measured four feet deep, and floating with mud only from a wet summer!" "What!" he cries, holding up his hands, and shuddering at the thought, "what must it, therefore, be in winter?" Ugh!

If he had pushed as far as North Wales, he would have found, even at that period, excellent roads, when the mountainous character of the country was taken into consideration. But we could have wished he had visited Lincolnshire, so that we might have heard what kind of roads that county then had. We suspect they must have been very bad indeed; or else they have since degenerated instead of improving. From the accounts, however, which he has given us, it will be observed that not the slightest care was bestowed upon the roads, either in providing suitable materials to mend them, when such materials were not already upon the spot, or to make the most of what the country afforded, and to turn it to the best use.

The general state of the high-roads appears, then, to have been even worse than that of the cross-roads and by-lanes of Essex, Suffolk, and Surrey, at the present time. It will also be observed, that the few portions of good road described are in counties where the land is very poor and light, and *vice versâ*, thus literally making good the old English proverb, "There is' good land where there is foul way."

A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of December, 1757, complains sadly of "the new turnpike road" from Godalming. On starting from Petworth, he has to pass "through a street about two hundred yards long, full of deep holes, and a precipice on one side of the street," and although on passing through a turnpike-gate he proceeds upon "a firm road," it is only "full wide enough for any

single cart, but by no means wide enough for two, so that whenever two meet, the one must drive down into the mud at the side of the bank, and, as there were no ditches nor drains to carry off the standing waters from those flats, they must soon be worse than the old clay roads." A fearful "trench, or ditch," crosses "the whole road from side to side about half a mile from the gate." But the worst predicament our traveller got into was at North Chappel, five miles from Petworth, where, the road being soaked with a previous shower, "it took my horse up to the belly the second step he made on it, and, had I not immediately dismounted and clambered up to some bushes, I had there been lodged for a season."

This reminds us of the case of a medical man who had occasion to take a by-road, abounding in bogs and quagmires, in an obscure part of Essex. Having arrived at one of the bogs in which his horse sank deeper at every step, he called to a boy at a distant farm, and inquired whether there was a good bottom. The reply was in the affirmative, but as he progressed, he found that himself and his steed were likely to be soon swallowed up in the bog, which continued to get deeper, and he indignantly cried out, "I thought you said there was a good bottom to this road?" "So there is," replied the urchin, "but *you have not come to it yet.*" We presume the same reply would have been given to the correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (who, by the way, ventured to make his journey "*after September,*" upon being assured that there was a turnpike road), and, as he scrambled to some bushes with his horse up to the belly in the mire, it might have been some consolation to him to know that there *was* a turnpike road, but he had not come to it yet!

But nearly all the information we possess of the state

of the roads in the eighteenth century, is of a period when great improvements had been effected, both in the making and mending of them, and the greater part of it relates to the turnpike and great leading roads only. What they had been at an earlier period of the century, or what the by-roads were at that time, we have no means of ascertaining, but we may form a pretty correct conjecture, we dare say, of the tremendous difficulties which the traveller by them had to encounter. What we know is sufficient to help us to a guess at what we do not know, in connexion with this subject.



## CHAPTER XV.

## PUBLIC CONVEYANCES.

HAVING taken a glimpse at the state of the roads during the last century, it behoves us next to see what manner of vehicles were constructed for traversing them, and how they were contrived to resist the sudden shocks, and withstand the jerking and jolting occasioned by such trifling inequalities as ruts four feet deep, and sloughs of mud up to the horses' bellies. That they could not travel very fast must be at once apparent, but the speed to which they did attain seems wonderful when we consider the obstacles in their way. Swift, in his Journal, mentions travelling from Wycombe to Hyde Park-corner, the distance of twenty-seven miles, in five hours, but this was no doubt by post or private conveyance, for the government expresses did not travel so expeditiously. "An express for his majesty was carried, July 7th (1717), from London at half-past two A.M., and arrived at East Grinstead at half-past three P.M.,"—to the great astonishment, no doubt, of the country!

A few announcements of the coach-proprietors, taken from various periods, will throw some light upon this branch of our subject. In 1839 (and possibly to this hour), a printed card, framed and glazed, was preserved

over the bar of the Black Swan Inn, at York, giving notice that—

“Your four days’ coach begins on Friday, the 12th April, 1706. All that are desirous to pass from London to York, or to any other place on that road, in this expeditious manner, let them repair to the Black Swan in Holbourne, in London, and to the Black Swan in Coney-street, York. At both places they may be received in a stage-coach, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, which actually performs the whole journey in the short space of four daies (if God permit)! The coach sets forth at five o’clock in the morning, and returns from York to Stamford, by Huntingdon, to London, in two daies more, allowing passengers 14lbs. weight, and all above 3d. per lb.”

A weary pilgrimage must it have been from Edinburgh to London:

“9TH MAY, 1734.—A coach will set out towards the end of next week for London, or any place on the road. To be performed in nine days, being three days sooner than any other coach that travels the road, for which purpose eight stout horses are stationed at proper distances.”

At this period night-travelling was not thought of: it was sufficiently hazardous to travel by day, and so great an undertaking was it considered, that, about 1720, a lady (Mrs. Manley) published a book of travels, under the title of “A Stage Coach Journey from London to Exeter,” which informs us that the coach started from London at three o’clock in the morning. At ten the exhausted travellers were allowed to alight and take their dinner at a road-side inn; and at three o’clock in the afternoon the journey was concluded for the day, and the coach drawn into the inn-yard till next morning. This journey from

London occupied four days of twelve hours each; so that, with a fair allowance for stoppages and meal-times, the coach could scarcely have travelled at the rate of four miles and a half in the hour. But if a Sunday intervened on the journey, the passengers were detained for the day in the town at which it chanced to find them, no stage-coaches being allowed to travel on the Sabbath. With these impediments, our readers will not be surprised to hear that, in 1745, the coach from Edinburgh to London, "the Northern Diligence, a huge, old-fashioned tub, drawn by three horses," according to Sir Walter Scott, performed its journey ("God willing," as the bills had it) in the moderate space of *three weeks*!

The arrangements for "sleeping the passengers" were always announced in the bills, thus:

"Manchester Machine, from the Swan with Two Necks, in two days; on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Sleep at Derby.

"Sheffield and Manchester, from ditto; same days, in two days. Sleep at Nottingham.

"Gloucester Post Coach, in one day. Carries four in and one out."

But, in 1740, an apparition appeared upon the road by night in the shape of a night-coach; but the desperate enterprise seems to have been but little favoured at first, and, as late as the 8th of March, 1774, we find a post-coach started "to go from the Rose and Crown, in St. John's-street, London; to run every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday; *putting up*, first day at Grantham, second day at York, and third day at Newcastle; to carry six inside and two out;" the journey performed by nineteen proprietors on the line of road. And, in 1760, the passengers to Brighton were detained for the night at East Grinstead



(thirty miles from London), where the coach put up, arriving at Brighton in the afternoon of the day after its departure from town.

In 1760, a coach started from London for Liverpool once a week, and accomplished the journey in four days; and, in 1765, a "flying-coach" ran to Dover in one day. This prodigy was drawn by eight horses. But even the Dover machines, with six horses, excited a sort of awe at this period by their speed. A French traveller, a Mr. Grosley, who travelled by one of them to London, says of them, "They are drawn by six horses, go twenty-eight leagues a day, from Dover to London, for a single guinea. Servants are entitled to a place for half that money, either behind the coach or upon the coach-box, which has three places."

Among a list of the terrific achievements of the coaches, starting from the Swan with Two Necks, in London, in April, 1774, we select the following as examples:

"A Post-Coach to Gloucester, in sixteen hours, and a Machine in one day, each three days a week. A Machine to Hereford twice a week, in a day and a half. A Machine to Salop every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, in two days. A Machine for Wolverhampton every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, in one day."

The bill winds up with the following startling notice:

"The Rumsey Machine, through Winchester, hung on steel springs, begins flying on the 3rd of April, from London to Poole, in one day!"

The *Daily Advertiser*, of April 9, 1739, furnishes us with several characteristic announcements, from among which we may quote the following:

"FOR BATH.—A good Coach and able Horses will set

out from the Black Swan Inn, in Holborn, on Wednesday or *Thursday*. Inquire of William Maud."

"The old-standing, constant Froom Flying Waggon, in three days, sets out with goods and passengers, from Froom for London, every Monday, by one o'clock in the morning, and will be at the King's Arms, at Holborn Bridge, the Wednesday following, by twelve o'clock at noon, from whence it will set out on Thursday morning, by one o'clock, for Amesbury, Shrewton, Chiltern, Heytesbury, Warminster, Froom, and all other places adjacent; and will continue, allowing each passenger fourteen pounds, and be at Froom on Saturday by twelve at noon. If any passengers have occasion to go from any of the aforesaid places, they shall be supplied with able horses and a guide by Joseph Clavey, the proprietor of the said Flying Waggon. The Waggon calls at the White Bear, in Piccadilly, coming in and going out, &c."

The general construction of these vehicles is thus described in the "*Tales of an Antiquary*:"

"They were principally of a dull black leather, thickly studded, by way of ornament, with black broad-headed nails, tracing out the panels, in the upper tier of which were four oval windows, with heavy red wooden frames, or leathern curtains. Upon the doors, also, were displayed, in large characters, the names of the places whence the coach started and whither it went, stated in quaint and antique language. The vehicles themselves varied in shape; sometimes they were like a distiller's vat, somewhat flattened, and hung equally balanced between the immense back and front springs. In other instances they resembled a violoncello case, which was, past all comparison, the most fashionable form: and then they hung in a more genteel posture, namely, inclining on to the back

springs, and giving to those who sat within the appearance of a stiff Guy Fawkes uneasily seated. The roofs of the coaches, in most cases, rose into a swelling curve, which was sometimes surrounded by a high iron guard. The coachman and the guard, who always held his carbine ready-cocked upon his knee, then sat together over a very long and narrow boot, which passed under a large spreading hammercloth, hanging down on all sides, and finished with a flowing and most luxuriant fringe. Behind the coach was the immense basket, stretching far and wide beyond the body, to which it was attached by long iron bars or supports passing beneath it, though even these seemed scarcely equal to the enormous weight with which they were frequently loaded. These baskets were, however, never very great favourites, although their difference of price caused them to be frequently well filled. The wheels of these old carriages were large, massive, ill-formed, and usually of a red colour, and the three horses that were affixed to the whole machine—the foremost of which was helped onwards by carrying a huge long-legged elf of a postilion, dressed in a cocked-hat, with a large green and gold riding-coat—were so far parted, by the great length of their traces, that it was with no little difficulty that the poor animals dragged their unwieldy burden along the road. It groaned and creaked at every fresh tug which they gave it, as a ship, rocking or beating-up against a heavy sea, strains all her timbers, with a low moaning sound, as she drives over the contending waves."

This description agrees in most of its details with the stage-coach exhibited in Hogarth's "Country Inn Yard," except that the guard in the latter bears a sword instead of a carbine, and the postilion is a dwarf-boy, not a "huge



long-legged elf," nor so elegantly caparisoned as the writer describes. In the "Night" of the same artist we have a similar picture of a "flying coach," upset by a bonfire on the Fifth of November; and, in the series of the "Election," are specimens of carriages "inclining on to the back springs," which gives them the appearance of having broken down.

A writer in the *Monthly Magazine* of October, 1822, gives a description of the old stage-coaches of his early days, and, in particular, mentions one—the "Hope"—which ran to Sheffield somewhere about 1780, previously to the great improvement introduced by Mr. John Palmer in 1784. We shall quote his remarks, as he enters upon the subject of the old crane-necked springs:

"The coach consisted, first, of the boot, a tall, clumsy, turret-like mass, on the top of which the coachman sat, that was erected on, and, without the intervention of any springs, was fixed on the fore axletree of the carriage; second, of an enormous wicker basket, in like manner fixed on the hind axletree; and, third, between these masses, the coach body was suspended by thick straps from four of what are now, for distinction's sake, called crane-necked springs. The roads were, at the period alluded to, in general, rough, sloughy, and uneven, and occasioned a degree of jolting and tossing about of the three distinct masses of which a stage-coach then consisted, such as those can scarcely conceive who may have seen only the modern coaches constructed of one piece, and resting on what are called grasshopper springs, so contrived and placed, that the jerk occasioned to either of the wheels by coming in contact with a projecting stone, or by momentarily sinking into a hole in the road, is received by, and equalised amongst four or more springs,

which act, not on a single corner of the coach as the crane-necked springs used to do."

Such coaches as these—unwieldy, ill-balanced, and frequently over-weighted on the roof—drawn by such horses, and travelling such roads, were constantly meeting with accidents—overthrows, breakings down, or stickings fast. But these were not the only, and scarcely the worst dangers to be dreaded; the significant hint about the guard's ready-cocked carbine, and the comfortable assurance with which the coach bills wound up of "each of these conveyances being well guarded," tell of another peril—the highwaymen by whom the roads were infested. So desperate were these banditti, that, sometimes single-handed, they would attack a coach, and, despite the guard's carbine, rob the affrighted passengers of their property. Here are instances, and we might fill our pages with similar ones:

"Tuesday evening, two of the Greenwich stages were stopped in Kent-street-road by a single highwayman, who robbed the passengers of their money, &c."—*London Evening Post*, May 7th, 1774.

"A few days ago the Ryegate coach was stopped a little way out of town by a single highwayman, who robbed the passengers of thirty pounds."—*Westminster Journal*, October 29th, 1774.

"Friday night, the Epping stage-coach was robbed on the forest, within a mile of the town, by two highwaymen, well mounted and masked; they robbed one inside passenger of half a guinea; they swore bitterly that one of the outside passengers, whom they pointed at, had been that day to receive twenty pounds, and if he did not immediately deliver the money he was a dead man. The poor man declaring that he had no such sum, one of them

struck him a violent blow across the wrist with the butt-end of his whip, and, after telling the coachman he had a set of d——d poor passengers, gave him a shilling, and rode off.”—*Old British Spy*, January 4th, 1783.

We have selected these from among a host of such paragraphs which every old newspaper presents, but one of the most daring of these outrages was committed on the “Devizes chaise” on the 3rd of June, 1752, by a single highwayman, near the Half-way House at Knightsbridge. The evidence of the man who captured the robber gives a graphic account of the affray.

“William Norton examined—The chaise to the Devizes having been robbed two or three times, as I was informed, I was desired to go in it to see if I could take the thief, which I did on the 3rd of June, about half an hour after one in the morning. I got into the chaise; the postboy told me the place where he had been stopped was near the Half-way House, between Knightsbridge and Kensington. As we came near the house, the prisoner came to us on foot, and said, ‘Driver, stop!’ He held a pistol tinderbox to the chaise, and said, ‘Your money directly! You must not stay—this minute your money!’ I said, ‘Don’t frighten us; I have but a trifle—you shall have it.’ Then I said to the gentlemen (there were three in the chaise), ‘Give your money.’ I took out a pistol from my coat-pocket, and from my breeches-pocket a five-shilling piece and a dollar. I held the pistol concealed in one hand and the money in the other. I held the money pretty hard. He said, ‘Put it in my hat.’ I let him take the five-shilling piece out of my hand, and, as soon as he had taken it, I snapped my pistol at him: it did not go off. He staggered back, and held up his hands, and said, ‘Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!’ I jumped out of the chaise; he



ran away, and I after him, about six or seven hundred yards, and then took him. I hit him a blow on his back; he begged for mercy on his knees: I took his handkerchief off and tied his hands with it, and brought him back to the chaise; then I told the gentlemen in the chaise that was the errand I came upon, and wished them a good journey, and brought the prisoner to London.

“Question by the prisoner—Ask him how he lives?”

“Norton—I keep a shop in Wych-street, and sometimes I take a thief.”

Not the least remarkable feature of this affair is that this footpad, who did not hesitate in stopping a chaise with five individuals in it, ran away on having a pistol presented at him, which, after all, “did not go off,” and merely crying, “Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!” allowed himself to be taken by a single man. If the postboy and passengers had shown some resolution on the first occasion, the chaise would, one would think, not have been stopped “two or three times,” or on the last and decisive one. It is not impossible that the coachmen might in some instances, as the charioteers of Mexico at the present day, have had a proper understanding with these freebooters—but we will not indulge these uncharitable thoughts: coachmen were always proverbially honest!

Of the stage-waggons, which were the only means of transit for poorer passengers, we have said as yet little, and nothing of the pack-horses, which in Roderick Random’s time (1739) formed the only goods conveyance in Scotland. By one of the former, Random and his friend Strap were conveyed to London from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in somewhere about a fortnight, for the moderate fare of ten shillings, his fellow-passengers being an aged usurer, a lady of pleasure, and a captain in the army

with his wife—a combination of characters and conditions which would seem to argue that the company by these conveyances was *somewhat* mixed.

Of the metropolitan conveyances, hackney-coaches or sedan-chairs were the only vehicles in which the streets of London could be traversed, as there were few short stages even to the immediate suburbs, and none at all from one part of the city to the other; in fact, London was then scarcely extensive enough to require a public conveyance from the heart of it to the outlying districts, or even from the east to the west ends. In unfavourable weather, and for short distances or state visits, the chair was the favourite vehicle, carried, as we have already described, by two stout Irishmen, and of which the fares, in 1724, were one shilling per hour, or a guinea if rented by the week. Hackney-coaches almost belong to our own time; but only in name: their glory departed with the progress of improvement in the paving, draining, and lighting of the town. They were generally worn-out gentlemen's carriages—many of them retaining on their panels the richly emblazoned and coroneted armorial bearings of their original possessors—drawn by a pair of wretched horses, and driven by a many-caped and heavy-coated Jehu. These old hackney-coachmen, to the full as extortionate as modern cabmen, presumed upon the impunity which a defective system of police had so long secured to outrage, and were desperate characters as any on the road. Passengers in private conveyances dreaded meeting a hackney-coachman almost as much as encountering a highwayman; for we find that, in 1733, a combination or conspiracy existed among them for upsetting all private carriages of any description which they might meet, under the pretence of an accidental collision, as they considered it as a

crying grievance, and detrimental to their interests, that people should be allowed to ride in their own vehicles instead of hiring a hackney-coach. A regular fee was established by this body for every carriage upset, or, as it was termed, "brought by the road;" and a premium held out to all postboys, postilions, grooms, and coachmen who assisted them in the destruction of their masters' carriages; and if they aided in effecting a collision by driving purposely in the way, with the perfect appearance of its being accidental, or attributable to the restiveness of the horses, or what not, or allowed themselves to be overtaken and upset, they were compensated for injury, defended from prosecution, and paid for the "job" out of the General Coachmasters' Fund. The *Weekly Register* of December the 8th, 1733, gives an account of a hard chase given by one of the body to a chaise and pair, which he pursued from Knightsbridge to beyond Brentford, where he contrived to upset it, and escape!

But there were still other dangers attendant upon hackney-coach travelling, and they were no more free from the attacks of highwaymen than stage-coaches, although they seldom went far beyond the streets of London. The *Postman* of October the 19th, 1729, deplores the decline of the hackney-coach business, "by the increase of street robbers; so that people, *especially in an evening*" (the use of the word "especially" would lead us to infer that there was danger even in the daytime), "choose rather to walk than ride in a coach, on account that they are in a readier posture to defend themselves, or call out for aid, if attacked."

There was also another kind of depredation practised upon hackney-coach travellers, against which the *Weekly Journal* of the 30th of March, 1717, thus cautions them:



“The thieves have got now such a villanous way of robbing gentlemen, that they cut holes through the backs of hackney-coaches, and take away their wigs, or the fine head-dresses of gentlewomen; so a gentleman was served last Sunday in Tooley-street, and another but last Tuesday in Fenchurch-street; wherefore this may serve as a caution to gentlemen and gentlewomen that ride single in the night time, to sit on the fore-seat, which will prevent that way of robbing.”

As the ladies' wigs were technically called “heads,” it must have sounded strange to hear some disconsolate beauty, on arriving home from a ball, complain that she had “lost her head.” We should be tempted to reply, it was no more than we had conjectured ever since she had taken to a false one.

The “silent highway,” as Mr. Knight has happily called the river Thames, was a favoured thoroughfare for the barges and pleasure-boats of the fashionable world, for many of the nobility had not yet discarded their “state-barges,” as Sir Roger de Coverley's expression shows us:—“If I was a lord or bishop, and kept a barge, I would not put a fellow in my livery that had not a wooden leg.” And no other road was thought of by the *élite* for reaching Vauxhall, or even passing to Chelsea, but the water. Probably this may be partly attributable to the dangers by which the roads were beset; but, be that as it may, there were risks even to be encountered on this “silent highway,” for, although, for a wonder, we do not remember to have heard of very many river-pirates or water-highwaymen, the boatmen contrived to make the journey sufficiently uncomfortable, especially to such of their passengers as they might discover to be possessed of weak nerves, by playing off mischievous tricks

and pranks for the purpose of frightening them, and which often put their own lives in jeopardy. Daniel De Foe, in his "Great Law of Subordination" (1724), says that he had "many times passed between London and Gravesend with these fellows;" and, after describing their conduct, and on one particular occasion the loss of a tilt-boat with fifty-two passengers, which resulted from their foolhardiness and "larking" propensities, adds, "I have been sometimes obliged, especially when there have been more men in the boat of the same mind, so that we have been strong enough for them, to threaten to cut their throats, to make them hand their sails and keep under shore, not to fright, as well as hazard the lives of their passengers where there was no need of it." The fact was, no doubt, as he suggests, "that the less frightened and timorous their passengers are, the more cautious and careful the watermen are, and the least apt to run into danger; whereas, if their passengers appear frightened, then the watermen grow saucy and audacious, show themselves venturous, and condemn the dangers which they are really exposed to."

The fares by the Gravesend boats, in 1724, were announced to be—"by tilt-boat, sixpence" (the "tilt-boat" was so called from its having a tilt spread over the passengers); "by wherry, one shilling,"—the wherry being the faster and more select conveyance. These are two more instances of the moderate fares charged by public conveyances in the early part of the century; as the accommodation, expedition, and safety were increased, the prices were raised in even a greater ratio, till now, when those essentials to pleasure or business travelling are nearest to perfection, the prices have dropped down to their original rate.

The *Chelmsford Chronicle* of December the 3rd, 1784,

hints dismally at the doings in the dark on the "silent highway," and at the existence of a race more to be feared even than the Gravesend boatmen :—"The merchants have hired twenty stout men armed with blunderbusses, pistols, &c., to row in boats up and down the river all night, in order to protect their shipping from being plundered by the fresh-water pirates."

How suggestive is this paragraph of awful scenes by night on that dark thoroughfare, the Thames—then uncrossed and unlighted by the numerous new bridges—of midnight murder, the death-struggle, and the last heavy splash in which the record of the deed is washed out, and the victim of the river-pirates sent floating down the river, if found, only to be a doubt to a coroner's jury as to how he came there!

A sea voyage was an undertaking of the greatest peril. Novel introductions into the art and science of navigation have disarmed it of many of the terrors that then hung about it. At the time we would speak of, even the barometer was not employed to give the warning of a coming tempest in time to prepare the ship to meet it. Enemies and pirates were on every sea, besides "dealers in the contraband," almost as troublesome; there were fewer light-houses, and many shoals, rocks, sands, and dangerous places had to be discovered, perhaps only at the cost of some hundreds of lives, and laid down in the charts. What troubles befel poor Mrs. Sterne in her attempt to cross over only to Ireland! Following the fortunes of her husband (the father of "Yorick"), she had occasion to make two journeys across the Channel, both of which appear to have nearly cost her her life, especially the second one, which is well calculated to show the uncertain state of communication between parts now not a day's journey



asunder. "We embarked," says Sterne, in his "Sketch of his own Life," "for Dublin, and had all been cast away by a most violent storm ; but, through the intercessions of my mother, the captain was prevailed upon to turn back into Wales, where we stayed a month, and at length got into Dublin, and travelled by land to Wicklow, where my father had, for some weeks, given us over for lost."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CREDULITY AND SUPERSTITION.

THE "Science of Astrology," although its most flourishing time had passed, still enthralled the unilluminated brains of our grandsires in its mystic signs and hieroglyphical calculations, and there were many gifted beings who amassed large fortunes by "casting nativities" for those who had an overweening curiosity to peep into the future, and an unlimited confidence in planetary influences.

The *Universal Magazine* of February, 1775, tells us of one of these cunning seers who allowed himself to be robbed while he was "stargazing:"

"January 10th.—Saturday evening.—A woman applied to a resolver of lawful questions in a court in Fleet-street, to be satisfied in relation to some future events; but while poor Albumazer was consulting the stars in his chamber in order to resolve her doubts, he seems to have been utterly ignorant of his own present fortune, for some thieves (supposed to be the inquirer's confederates) stripped his other apartments of everything that was conveniently portable."

A peep is afforded us into the chamber of one of these

worthies in an old print of 1760, as well as in the description of Cadwallader's imposition in Smollett's "Peregrine Pickle." In the former, the floor is strewn with books, globes, telescopes, compasses, &c., in those days objects of wonder and even fear to the vulgar; and the walls hung with skeletons of lizards, bats, toads, moles, owls, alligators, and serpents, while snakes and abortions of the human foetus are preserved in spirits in gigantic jars, and a huge black cat sits gravely blinking on the table. In the midst of this imposing display, calculated to inspire awe and terror into the rash diver into Fortune's secrets, sits the astrologer, magician, wizard, and fortune-teller, a lean, grizzly man, with a long flowing white beard, as would become a prophet; his head encased in a tight-fitting black velvet or fur cap, and his spare body enwrapped in a long black gown. A volume of symbols is open before him, which he is consulting by the aid of a pair of spectacles, which add to the appearance of deep study which his furrowed brow would indicate, and by his side lie open a book of mathematical problems, and a scroll covered with strange Egyptian characters. This portrait, we believe, represents an astrologer who resided in the Old Bailey, and of whom it is reported that, while he was in the zenith of his fame, the thoroughfare was frequently rendered impassable by the number of carriages waiting at his door, which had conveyed the nobility and gentry to have their "fortunes told."

These astrologers seem to have haunted their old habitations after their death, if we read the following paragraph aright:

"The 'Flying Horse,' a noted victualling house in Moorfields, next to that of the late Astrologer Trotter, has been molested for several nights past, stones and



bottles being thrown into the house, to the great annoyance and terror of the guests.”—*News Letter*, February 28th, 1716.

We will warrant the troubled spirit of Mr. Trotter was freely suspected of these midnight gambols.

But astrologers were a doomed race—they were rapidly decimating in number, and at the close of the century there was scarcely one left in London. “Prophets” and female fortune-tellers have struggled on, with a wonderful and persevering disregard of the law of vagrancy, to our own day, and there is still a publication carrying on a trade in astrology belonging to the Company of Stationers; but little more than a century ago, they had dupes among the highest classes, and staunch supporters and believers in the middle and lower ones, who trusted implicitly to the predictions and awful revelations of their Almanacks, Diaries, and Messengers. Mr. Charles Knight gives us a long list of these productions in existence about the year 1723. There were:

“Remarkable News from the Stars. By William Andrews, Student in Astrology. Printed by A. Wilde.

“Merlinus Anglicus, Junior; or, the Starry Messenger. By Henry Coley, Student in the Mathematicks and the Celestial Sciences. Printed by J. Read.

“A Diary, Astronomical, Astrological, Meteorological. By Job Gadbury, Student in Physick and Astrology. Printed by T. W.

“Vox Stellarum. By Francis Moore, Licensed Physician, and Student in Astrology. Printed by Thomas Wood.

“Merlinus Liberatus. By John Partridge. Printed by J. Roberts.

“Parker’s Ephemeris. Printed by J. Read.

“The Celestial Diary. By Salem Pearse, Student in Physick and Celestial Science. Printed by J. Dawkes.

“Apollo Anglicanus, the English Apollo. By Richard Saunder, Student in the Physical and Mathematical Sciences. Printed by A. Wilde.

“Great Britain’s Diary; or, the Union Almanack. By the same Author. Printed by J. Roberts.

“Olympia Domata. By John Wing Philomoth. Printed by J. Dawkes.

“Wing. By the same Author. Printed by W. Pearson.

“An Almanack, after the Old and New Fashion. By Poor Robin, Knight of the British Islands, a well-wisher to the Mathematicks. Printed by W. Bowyer.”

A rare treasury of marvels to come—dangers hanging overhead, impending revolutions, threatened wars, approaching plagues, and other wondrous shadows of the future, all cast by starlight on the pages of the astrologers; for these almanacks and Merlins not only professed to predict the state of the weather for the ensuing twelve months, but accurately to foretel all public events and occurrences in the various countries of the earth, besides stating “the proper seasons for physick and blood-letting” (for it was then considered necessary to be “blooded” twice a year), and other most surprising information.

It was one of the worthy astrologers we have enumerated (John Partridge) who was rendered immortally ridiculous by the prophecy of his approaching death, published by Dean Swift under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, and followed up by an account of the fulfilment of the prophecy, so repeatedly indignantly protested against by poor Partridge, who continued, till he was weary, seriously assuring his friends that he was still alive, and the prophecy was false and unfulfilled.

We have said the female fortune-tellers seemed to have been longer lived, for they have survived to the present century—but how pale is their star! how diminished their glory!

With the aid of a sheet of hieroglyphic characters, not much unsimilar to those still seen on the bottles containing various coloured liquids in the chemists' shop windows—Chaldean, Assyrian, or what you pleased—a pack of cards, the grounds of coffee, or the coals in the fire, these witch-like crones could, for half-a-crown, ensure a young lady a *handsome* husband—for five shillings a *rich* one—and for half a guinea both a rich and handsome one. As diverse as were their branches of science, as various their dupes. They were much consulted in aiding the recovery of stolen goods, and discovering (query, *revealing*?) the places of their concealment—a part of their profession in which they were no doubt able occasionally to be useful, if well fee'd. On the other hand, so credulous were those furthest removed from the darkness of ignorance, that George the First, on being told by a French professor of the art that he would not survive his wife's death a year, had such a strong faith in the prediction that he took leave of the prince and princesses on setting out for Germany, and, with tears in his eyes, told them he should never see them more.

Neither were the proceedings of these impostors carried on stealthily. Here is the handbill issued by a prophetess, in 1777:

“Mrs. Edwards, who, in Hungary, Russia, China, and Tartary, has studied the abstruse and occult sciences, under the most learned sages, augurs, astronomers, and soothsayers, is returned to England, after many years of studious application, and most humbly dedicates her



knowledge in prescience to the ladies, being fully acquainted with the mysteries and secrets of the profession, and amply provided with the requisite art and skill to answer all answerable questions in astrology. N.B.—She may be consulted from ten in the morning till nine at night, at No. 22 (a pastrycook's), opposite Bow-street, in Great Russell-street, Covent-garden."

The lottery system afforded an abundant harvest to these fortune-tellers. Every one was anxious to know whether his ticket would be drawn a blank or a prize, and some "Mrs. Edwards" was resorted to, to draw aside the curtain which concealed to-morrow. Out upon the ragged gipsies and vagabond fortune-tellers of modern times—out upon your Derby prophets with only one initial to write under—what think ye of the days when one of the "profession" (mark the term!) could afford to travel over the whole globe, even into China and Tartary, in pursuit of mystical knowledge—to issue handbills to make known her fame—and to occupy the first floor of a pastrycook's in Covent-garden?

We find, as late as 1774, weekly prophecies on the issue of political events inserted in the *London Evening Post*. The soothsayer of this paper was one J. Harman, of High-street, Saint Giles. During Wilkes's contest for the mayoralty, he predicts the success of that popular champion, for the excellent and conclusive reason that "the planet Saturn, who is at this time Wilkes's Significator, is just entering Libra, the sign of Justice, which, in all combats and wars has been always found to be most powerful." The same day's paper (October the 4th, 1774) announces the return of Alderman Bull by the livery. Verily thou wert at fault this time, J. Harman!

The popular belief in witchcraft—another legacy of the

previous century—although on the wane, was still existing. If a man died, or a cow fell sick—if the harvest were light, or the weather cold—if a child were fractious, or the milk turned sour, there was no accounting for such an occurrence but by concluding that the man, cow, corn, weather, child or milk were bewitched; and if, by any unfortunate chance, an old crone could be found hobbling about the neighbourhood, she was at once reputed to be the witch. And there was never wanting evidence of her being an adept in the black art; one had seen her *tête-à-tête* with the devil himself in all his hideous deformity of horns and cloven foot—nay, the approver would swear to within an inch of the length of his tail; another detected her drawing magic circles on the ceiling, or tracing them in the air with her wand—a well-known invocation to the Evil Spirit; a third produced sundry mysterious characters which he had discovered in her cottage (and, be it remembered, that in those days, and in the absence of the schoolmaster, *all* characters—even the alphabet itself—were mysterious in the eyes of the lower classes); a fourth detected something peculiarly malicious and sinister in the face of the old lady's cat, and that helpless animal was forthwith denounced as the "familiar spirit" which assisted her machinations; and everything, down to the very furniture of her room, was made to furnish proof conclusive of her evil practices, and the unhappy beldam was arraigned as a witch and adjudged to the usual ordeal of "sinking or swimming." Accordingly, on the day of trial, a motley crowd of peasantry assembled around the nearest pond, and the old woman, bound hand and foot, and enveloped in a sheet, was dragged to the spot, and plunged into the water. Here she had the choice of two deaths—if she sank, she would most likely be drowned;

if she swam, it was the arch-fiend who supported her: she was undoubtedly a witch, and was either held under water or despatched in some other way. It is true, these exhibitions were not of such frequent occurrence as they had been in the seventeenth century, of the ignorance of which they were a relic, but there was a sufficient number to render them also a feature of the eighteenth.

Another mode of testing a witch, which prevailed at length over the more barbarous one of ducking (a process which was attended very often by death, either from drowning or from alarm, or, still oftener, exposure to the cold), was by weighing the suspected party against the church Bible. We give one instance of the application of this test from a comparatively recent period:

“28th of February.—One Susannah Hannokes, an elderly woman, of Wyngrove, near Aylesbury, was accused by her neighbour of bewitching her spinning-wheel, so that she could not make it go round, and offered to make oath of it before a magistrate; on which the husband, in order to justify his wife, insisted upon her being tried by the church Bible, and that the accuser should be present. Accordingly she was conducted to the parish church, where she was stripped of all her clothes to her shift and overcoat, and weighed against the Bible, when, to the no small mortification of the accuser, she outweighed it, and was honourably acquitted of the charge.”  
—*Annual Register for 1759.*

And this scarcely thirty miles from London! But it was not till the 10th Geo. II. (1736) that witchcraft ceased to be a capital offence in the eye of the law, so no wonder that the ignorant still retained the delusion which the judges of the land had not discarded. It is true that very few instances of its being carried into force can be



found. Mr. Wills alludes to Mrs. Hicks and her daughter, who were executed at Huntingdon, in 1716, "for selling their souls to the devil, making their neighbours vomit pins, and raising a storm by which a certain ship was almost lost;" and to the execution of two women for witchcraft at Northampton, somewhere about 1710, but does not give his authority; but it is certain that, in 1712, one Jane Wenham was condemned to death on the same charge, although not executed.

In Motrol's "Life of Brissot," it is stated that when Lord Mansfield was going the circuit, an old woman was brought before him for trial at a country assize, charged with being a witch, several persons having sworn that they had seen her walking on her head with her heels in the air. After reading the depositions with as much gravity as he could assume, his lordship delivered his opinion in these words: "Since you have seen this poor woman walking in the air, though her legs are scarcely able to support her on the earth, I can of course entertain no doubt of the fact; but this witch is an Englishwoman, and subject, as well as you and I, to the laws of England, every one of which I have just run over in my mind without being able to hit upon any one which prohibits persons from walking in the air if they should find it convenient. All those persons, therefore, who have seen the accused perform her aerial promenades, are at liberty to follow her example." This was a very different view of the subject to that which Sir Matthew Hale had taken, when, declaring his belief in witchcraft, he sentenced two old women to death upon a similar charge—a sentence which was carried into effect at Bury Saint Edmunds in 1655.

But in 1750, the populace, finding that the law would not aid them in suppressing the odious crimes of sorcery

and witchcraft, took it into their own hands, determined that justice should not be defeated through any omission in the statute-book, and murdered an old woman in Hertfordshire on the charge of being a witch, "with all the wantonness of brutality," as Smollett has recorded; and the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1731 mentions a similar murder perpetrated at Frome, in Somersetshire, in the September previous.

When we find De Foe a devout believer in, and writing a sober treatise upon, ghosts and supernatural appearances—when we know that Doctor Johnson had a serious inclination to the same belief, and that Goldsmith was almost a half-believer, can we be astonished that men of less powerful reasoning faculties should have entertained a strong conviction of their existence? We can scarcely wonder at their being deluded by the clumsy contrivances of the Cock-lane ghost! This memorable imposition is matter of history, and so familiar that it is scarcely necessary to enter into details. Suffice it to remind our readers of the steps which it was thought necessary to take in order to pacify the public mind, and "lay the troubled spirit." The fame of certain mysterious knockings on the bedroom wall in an obscure house in Smithfield having spread over the town, and men of all ranks having visited the scene of the alleged supernatural visitation, and come away without detecting the imposition, it was arranged that the Reverend Mr. Aldrich, of Clerkenwell, with a deputation of the inhabitants, should await the visit of the ghost and question it. This was done on the night of February the 1st, 1762, and an interview appointed with the invisible spirit, to take place in its vault in St. John's Church, whither they repaired, after "very seriously advertising to it" their intention, and, in the dead

of night, they "solemnly called upon the spirit to perform its promise of unfolding itself." Its non-compliance, and several other circumstances coming to light, they were led to the detection of the imposture, and the principal in the confederacy was imprisoned for two years and pilloried thrice, his wife imprisoned for a year, and his servant for three months.

Other impostors practised upon the public credulity with almost equal success. In 1772 sprang up what went by the name of the Stockwell Ghost, by which an elderly lady, Mrs. Golding, was frightened from house and home, and the whole neighbourhood thrown into agonies of terror by the mischievous but ingenious artifices of her servant, one Ann Robinson.

In another vein of credulity, the public were, in 1726, actually made to believe that a woman, named Mary Tofts, had been delivered of four black rabbits, and another woman of a ram!

The absurd superstition that the sovereign had the power of curing the king's evil, by touching the person affected, continued to obtain until the reign of George the First.\* Swift, in his "Journal to Stella," mentions making an application through the Duchess of Ormond, in 1711, to get a boy touched by the queen, but adds, "but the queen has not been able to touch, and it now grows so warm, I fear she will not at all." At a much later period, we read of children being taken upon the scaffold after an execution, to have the hand of the corpse applied to them, the "death sweat" of a man who had been hanged being held efficacious in scrofulous diseases; and the disgusting practice was permitted as late as 1760.

\* The house of Hanover never pretended to the possession of this gift.



But we find another patent cure of the king's evil mentioned in an old work "by William Ellis, farmer, of Little Gaddesdon, near Hempstead, Herts," published at Salisbury in 1750. This is no other than the dried dead body of a toad, to be hung in a silk bag round the neck; although two of the legs from a live toad were still better, for "as it pined, wasted, and died, the distemper would likewise waste and die."

All kinds of specifics for ensuring a patriarchal old age, if not actual immortality—Elixirs Vitæ, and the like—were sold and bought by sanguine dupes; but beauty was to be got at the mere expense of a walk:

"Yesterday, according to annual and superstitious custom, a number of persons went into the fields, and bathed their faces with the dew on the grass (May-dew), under the idea that it would render them beautiful."—*Morning Post*, May 2nd, 1791.

Retailers of health at a cheap rate were among the class who took advantage of the public credulity, and were more numerous than the quacks of the present day, and rather different in their course of proceeding. They principally "pitched their tents" in Smithfield, Tower-hill, Moorfields, &c., and the public were attracted to their rival establishments by a mountebank, merry-andrew, harlequin, clown, or tumbler, who drew a crowd together by exhibiting his feats on a stage erected in front of the booth, and who, after flinging a summerset, or indulging in a grotesque grimace, would wind up his announcement somewhat in the following fashion:—"Come along! Come along, all you who are halt, lame, or blind! This is the cheapest shop for health and long life. The illustrious doctor is inside, making up his elixir to lengthen your days, and performing his miraculous cures! Make

way there for that gentleman with the crutches. Come along, sir! Come along, and be whole!"

The advertisements of these quacks bespeak an amount of ignorance and credulity on the part of the public that is perfectly astonishing. We quote the following from the *Evening Post* of August the 6th, 1717:

"This is to give notice, that Doctor Benjamin Thornhill, sworn servant to his Majesty King George, *Seventh Son of the Seventh Son*, who has kept a stage in the rounds of West Smithfield for several months past, will continue to be advised with every day in the week, from eight in the morning till eight at night, at his lodgings at the Swan Inn, in West Smithfield, till Michaelmas, for the good of all people that lie languishing under distempers, he knowing that '*Talenta in agro non est abscondita!*'—that a talent ought not to be hid in the earth. Therefore he exposes himself in public for the good of the poor. The many cures he has performed has given the world great satisfaction, having cured fifteen hundred people of the king's evil, and several hundreds that have been blind, lame, deaf, and diseased. God Almighty having been pleased to bestow upon him so great a talent, he thinks himself bound in duty to be helpful to all sorts of persons that are afflicted with any distemper. He will tell you in a minute what distemper you are troubled with, and whether you are curable or not. If not curable, he will not take any one in hand, if he might have five hundred pounds for a reward."

Another of these empirical practitioners advertises a long list of questions in the *Original Weekly Journal* of December the 28th, 1723, for the purpose of putting the public on their guard against "such notorious cheats," and winds up the announcement with the following

modest allusion to himself:—"For your own sake apply to some man of ingenuity and probity who appears to justify his practice by his success, one of which invites you to his house at the Golden Heart and Square Lamp, in Crane-court, near Fetter-lane. Ask for the surgeon, who is to be advised with every morning till eleven o'clock, and from two till nine at night, in any distemper."

A Mrs. Mapp was a favourite doctress, in or about 1736 (for the curative power was not confined to the male sex), and in one of Mr. Pulteney's letters, dated December the 21st, in that year, we find her mentioned as a famous "she-bonesetter and mountebank."

Many of the male repairers of shattered constitutions and fractured limbs were foreigners or Jews, and we need scarcely add, in most cases had very little, if any, knowledge of either surgery or medicine, who traded on the ignorance of the lower classes, upon a successful but accidental cure, or just sufficient knowledge to perform a simple one, and cunning enough to pass it off as a miracle.

We are not informed whether any of these gentry prescribed for the unfortunate tradesman whose case we find recorded in the *Westminster Journal* of April the 22nd, 1775:

"Tuesday morning, Mr. Jefferson, corn-chandler, in Vine-street, Southwark, set out for the salt water at Gravesend, having been bit a few days before by a little dog that went mad, and dangerous symptoms beginning to appear."

By the way, so great a terror was felt of mad dogs, that, in 1760, the Lord Mayor of London offered a bounty of half-a-crown for every dog's head that was



brought to the Mansion House; but, after paying away 438 half-crowns, he began to sicken of his zeal, which he found too expensive.

But let us return to the impostors of the eighteenth century, with whom we have not yet done, for we have not at present noticed a very numerous class—the Conjurers and Professors of the Art of Magic. Hogarth has enshrined one of the tribe, Doctor Faustus (who died May the 25th, 1731, leaving a fortune of ten thousand pounds amassed in his calling), in exposing the rage which then existed for this species of diversion. But the law did not always allow the public to be imposed upon with impunity, and, as in our own day, although the fashionable foreign knave might conjure the cash out of the pockets of his majesty's lieges, the low English wizard was a vagabond fit only for the treadmill or the stocks. On the 8th of May, 1759, according to the *Annual Register*, "A young man in the shameful disguise of a conjurer, with a large wig and hat of an extraordinary size, and an old nightgown, was committed to Bridewell, being charged with having used subtle craft to deceive and impose upon his majesty's subjects."

But, reverting to the empirical professors of medicine, if the quack doctors themselves were obtrusive in their ways of winning custom, the vendors of quack nostrums were equally so, and their panacea were of more universal efficacy, and warranted to reach more subtle disorders, than modern quacks have thought of healing, or even dreamt of the existence of. The first edition of the "Spectator" has the following advertisements of some precious heal-alls:

"An admirable confect, which effectually cures stuttering and stammering in children or grown persons, though

never so bad, causing them to speak distinct and free, without any trouble or difficulty; it remedies all manner of impediments of the speech, or disorders of the voice of any kind, proceeding from what cause soever, rendering those persons capable of speaking easily and free, and with a clear voice, who before were not able to utter a sentence without hesitation. Its stupendous effects in so quickly and effectually curing stuttering and stammering and all disorders of the voice, and difficulty in the delivery of the speech, are really wonderful. Price 2s. 6d. per pot, with directions. Sold only at Mr. Osborn's toy-shop, at the Rose and Crown, under St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet-street."

"Loss of Memory or Forgetfulness certainly cured by a grateful electuary peculiarly adapted for that end. It strikes at the primary source, which few apprehend, of forgetfulness—makes the head clear and easy—the spirits free, active, and undisturbed—corroborates and revives all the noble faculties of the soul, such as thought, judgment, apprehension, reason, and memory; which last, in particular, it so strengthens, as to render that faculty exceeding quick and good beyond imagination; thereby enabling those whose memory was before almost totally lost, to remember the minutest circumstances of their affairs, &c., to a wonder. Price 2s. 6d. a pot. Sold only at Mr. Payne's, at the Angel and Crown, in St. Paul's Churchyard, with directions."

Doctor James's powders were in great request, and Goldsmith was a firm believer in their efficacy to the last; but it does not appear to have been noticed that Newberry, of St. Paul's Churchyard, was, as he advertises, "Sole Agent" for the sale of them.

Another miraculous charm was the Anodyne Necklace,

“which,” says the advertisement, “after the wearing them but one night, children have immediately cut their teeth with safety, who, but just before, were on the brink of the grave with their teeth, fits, fevers, convulsions, gripes, loosenesses, &c., all proceeding from the teeth, and have almost miraculously recovered.” The price of this wonderful necklace was 5s. 5d.: but then it was “patronised by the King for the royal children!”

The *Grub Street Journal* of January the 9th, 1735, contains a formidable list of the quacks who had reigned for a time in public estimation from the beginning of the century. Among them we find :

“First—Doctor Tom Saffold, the Heel-maker, who used to publish his bills in verse, thus:

Here's Saffold's pills, much better than the rest,  
Deservedly have gained the name of best;  
A box of eighteen pills for eighteen pence,  
Tho' 'tis too cheap in any man's own sense.

“Second—Sir William Read, Mountebank, Oculist, and Sworn Operator for the Eyes, ‘who,’ it is stated, ‘could not read one word,’ but ‘was knighted, and kept a chariot.’ He was a tailor by trade.

“Third—Roger Grant, originally a tinker, Oculist to Queen Anne.

“Fourth—Doctor Trotter, of Moorfields, a Conjuror, Fortune-teller, and Mountebank.

“Fifth—The ‘Unborn Doctor’ of Moorfields. This was a name with which he dubbed himself for attraction’s sake, and explained it by saying ‘he was not born a doctor.’

“Sixth—An Anonymous Fortune-teller, whose bills announced that he had been ‘the Counsellor to the Counsellors of several kingdoms; that he had the seed of the true female fern, and also had a glass.’



“Seventh—Doctor Hancock, who recommended cold water and stewed prunes as a general panacea. He was a shining light till he was put out by the writings of some men of superior sense.

“Eighth—Doctor Anodyne, the inventor of the necklace which bears his name, to assist children in cutting their teeth. One year he informs us, gratis, that all the woodcocks and cuckoos go annually to the moon. Another year he presents us (gratis, also, good man!) with an almanack crammed with many valuable secrets, particularly one receipt to choke those noxious vermin the bugs, and another to make sack-whey.

“Ninth—The famous Doctor who has taught us to make a soup, a hash, a fricasee of quicksilver, which he intended should pass in a regular and continued stream through the system till the patient was cured.

“Tenth—The Worm Doctor in Lawrence Pountney-lane; and

“Eleventh—Mr. Ward, of whom the public are cautioned in the pithy lines,

Before you take his drop or pill,  
Take leave of friends and make your will.”

Thanks for this list, Mr. Bavius of the *Grub Street Journal*! Let us hear Mr. Bickerstaff of the “Tatler:”

“There are some who have gained themselves great reputation for physick by their birth, as the Seventh Son of the Seventh Son, and others by not being born at all, as the ‘Unborn Doctor,’ who I hear is lately gone the way of his patients, having died worth five hundred pounds per annum, though he was not born to a halfpenny.”

“There would be no end of enumerating the

several imaginary perfections and unaccountable artifices by which the tribe of men ensnare the minds of the vulgar, and gain crowds of admirers. I have seen the whole front of a mountebank's stage, from one end to the other, faced with patents, certificates, medals, and great seals, by which the several princes of Europe have testified their particular respect and esteem for the doctor. Every great man with a sounding title has been his patient. I believe I have seen twenty mountebanks that have given physic to the Czar of Muscovy. The Great Duke of Tuscany escapes no better. The Elector of Brandenburg was likewise a very good patient." . . . . .  
"I remember when our whole island was shaken with an earthquake some years ago, there was an impudent mountebank, who sold pills which (as he told the country people) were very good against an earthquake!"

This is the climax! Shame on those credulous times! But stay: Mr. Bickerstaff says this was "some years ago," and, as the century was only ten years old when he said so, we would carry it to the account of the previous one, but unfortunately Dr. Smollett has recorded a case of credulity almost as bad as this, and we are bound to quote him. In the spring of 1750, he tells us, that two shocks of an earthquake having been perceptibly felt in London, a crazy soldier increased the alarm that they created, by predicting another and severer shock, to occur on the 8th of April, which was to destroy the cities of London and Westminster, and, as the only means of salvation, preached up repentance. The terror which this prophecy caused among all ranks and classes was productive of a good effect as long as it lasted :

"The churches were crowded with penitent sinners ;

the sons of riot and profligacy were overawed into sobriety and decorum. The streets no longer resounded with execrations or the noise of brutal licentiousness; and the hand of charity was liberally opened. Those whom fortune had enabled to retire from the devoted city, fled to the country with hurry and precipitation, insomuch that the highways were encumbered with horses and carriages. Many who had in the beginning combated these groundless fears with the weapons of reason and ridicule, began insensibly to imbibe the contagion, and felt their hearts fail in proportion as the hour of probation approached; even science and philosophy were not proof against the unaccountable effects of this communication. In after-ages, it will hardly be believed that, on the evening of the 8th of April, the open fields that skirted the metropolis were filled with an incredible number of people assembled in chairs, in chaises, and coaches, as well as on foot, who waited, in the most fearful suspense, until morning and the return of day disproved the truth of the dreaded prophecy. Then their fears vanished; they returned to their respective habitations in a transport of joy."

But,

The Devil was sick—the Devil a priest would be;  
The Devil got well—the Devil a priest was he.

The panic over, "they were soon reconciled to their abandoned vices, which they seemed to resume with redoubled affection, and once more bid defiance to the vengeance of Heaven!"

This was the occasion alluded to by Horace Walpole in his letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated April the 2nd, 1750:

"Several women have made earthquake gowns, that is,



warm gowns to sit out of doors all to-night. These are of the more courageous." Others of his female titled acquaintances sought an asylum at an inn, ten miles from town, where they were going "to play at brag till five in the morning."

But the threatened Destroyer did not keep his appointment, and these amiable dames were spared, to play at brag another day!

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE WARS AND APPREHENSIONS OF INVASION.

THE last century was a peculiarly pugnacious one—our grandfathers were very fond of fighting! In 1701, they began a war with France, which, although patched up with a treaty of peace for a time, continued, with very little intermission, till the end of the century; in 1718, they had a quarrel with Spain, which kept the two countries at a greater or less degree of enmity for years; in 1715, the rebellion of the Jacobites began, and cannot be said to have been put down till the signal rout of their forces in 1745-6; in 1741, our troops were fighting in Flanders; in 1753, they were fighting the French and Indians in America; in 1777, they were fighting our own colonists in America; in 1793, they were fighting in the Netherlands; and 1799 found them fighting in India: to say nothing of a little boxing in the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and the Nile; in fact, they were always fighting. Then as for invasions! they were looked for in every hour of the day and night: our grandfathers might have been said to have slept under arms. Spain landed her three hundred troops in Scotland; in 1743, France *threatened* an invasion; in 1745, the Scottish and French allies *did* invade; and, in 1750, the government *prepared*

for a French invasion. And these symptoms of combativeness made words quite familiar to the public ear, which we hope now are becoming obsolete and of obscure meaning, such as privateers, letters of marque, convoys, press-gangs, kidnappers, bounties, militia, volunteers, &c., &c.

In the uncertainty attending the movements of the foes with which Old England had to contend, it was, of course, a wise policy that dictated the caution and preparation for anything in the shape of an invasion, which were exercised so warily by the government; but the state of suspense and sense of insecurity which the constant apprehension of the debarkation of French or Spanish troops upon our shores was the means of generating, displayed itself sometimes in the most ludicrous aspects. The roll of a mountebank's drum in the streets, or the firing off of their loaded guns by the homeward-bound Indiamen coming up the river Thames, were sometimes mistaken for the tocsins of alarm, and the loyal citizen flew to his musket, to defend his native land. Labouring under the constant expectation of a descent upon our coasts, the government had look-out men stationed, and beacon-fires prepared along it. One of the former spread a panic through the South-Eastern counties in 1758, by announcing the appearance of a hostile fleet approaching the mouth of the Thames. Two Dutch hoys were observed from the Downs, and mistaken by the lieutenant of the look-out ship for Frenchmen. The commodore was apprised of the fact, and gave chase to them, in the mean while sending off an express to London announcing the approach of the French squadron in the Channel; and the courier circulating the momentous news as he flew along, drew forth the local bands of militia and loyal volunteers, and created great alarm in London.



Without particularising the different measures which this apprehension called forth—as camps in Hyde Park, and fortifications of the coast, which are incidental to times of trouble—we may advert to the rage which the people themselves displayed for playing at soldiers. In 1757, an act was passed for raising a militia for the national protection, and although we are not disposed to weary the reader with statistics, it may serve to show on what scale this force was organised, if we give the number of privates which each county was required to furnish to it:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Bedfordshire . . . . .                           | 400  |
| Berkshire . . . . .                              | 560  |
| Buckinghamshire . . . . .                        | 560  |
| Cambridgeshire . . . . .                         | 480  |
| Cheshire and Chester . . . . .                   | 560  |
| Cornwall . . . . .                               | 640  |
| Cumberland . . . . .                             | 320  |
| Derbyshire . . . . .                             | 560  |
| Devonshire and Exon . . . . .                    | 1600 |
| Dorsetshire and Poole . . . . .                  | 640  |
| Durham . . . . .                                 | 400  |
| Essex . . . . .                                  | 960  |
| Gloucestershire and Bristol . . . . .            | 960  |
| Herefordshire . . . . .                          | 480  |
| Hertfordshire . . . . .                          | 560  |
| Huntingdonshire . . . . .                        | 320  |
| Kent and Canterbury . . . . .                    | 960  |
| Lancashire . . . . .                             | 800  |
| Leicestershire . . . . .                         | 560  |
| Lincolnshire and Lincoln . . . . .               | 1200 |
| Middlesex (Tower Hamlets) . . . . .              | 1160 |
| Ditto (rest of) . . . . .                        | 1600 |
| Monmouthshire . . . . .                          | 240  |
| Norfolk and Norwich . . . . .                    | 960  |
| Northamptonshire . . . . .                       | 640  |
| Northumberland, Newcastle, and Berwick . . . . . | 560  |
| Nottinghamshire and Nottingham . . . . .         | 480  |
| Oxfordshire . . . . .                            | 560  |
| Rutlandshire . . . . .                           | 120  |

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Shropshire . . . . .                   | 640  |
| Somersetshire . . . . .                | 840  |
| Southampton, county and town . . . . . | 960  |
| Stafford and Lichfield . . . . .       | 560  |
| Suffolk . . . . .                      | 960  |
| Surrey . . . . .                       | 800  |
| Sussex . . . . .                       | 800  |
| Warwickshire and Warwick . . . . .     | 640  |
| Westmoreland . . . . .                 | 240  |
| Wiltshire . . . . .                    | 800  |
| Worcestershire and Worcester . . . . . | 560  |
| Yorkshire, West Riding . . . . .       | 1240 |
| Ditto, North ditto . . . . .           | 720  |
| Ditto, Hull, and East ditto . . . . .  | 400  |
| Anglesea . . . . .                     | 80   |
| Brecknockshire . . . . .               | 160  |
| Cardiganshire . . . . .                | 120  |
| Carmarthenshire and town . . . . .     | 200  |
| Carnarvonshire . . . . .               | 80   |
| Denbighshire . . . . .                 | 280  |
| Flintshire . . . . .                   | 120  |
| Glamorganshire . . . . .               | 360  |
| Merionethshire . . . . .               | 80   |
| Montgomeryshire . . . . .              | 240  |
| Pembrokeshire . . . . .                | 160  |
| Radnorshire . . . . .                  | 120  |

Making a force of 32,000 privates, who were to be employed in home service only, and to be amenable for the most part to the civil authority. By a later act of parliament, parties "drawn for the militia" were allowed to find substitutes, and regular agencies were formed for this purpose, the premium in 1795 being 7s. 6d. or 10s. 6d. each; and subsequently, by an act which passed in 1779, the militia force throughout the kingdom was doubled.

Horace Walpole speaks of the review of the militia, in 1759, by the king in person, in Hyde Park, and, alluding to Lord Orford, their colonel, describes the uniform of their officers as "scarlet, faced with black, buff waistcoat, and gold buttons."

In addition to the militia were the corps of volunteers—the Loyal Westminster Volunteers, the Light Horse Volunteers, and local bodies in every district in the country—in which the most quiet professions and pacific trades armed themselves to a man. The attorney-general threw down his pen and took up the sword at the head of the Temple Volunteers, and Charles Kemble began to think of playing the warrior in earnest in the Westminster Volunteers. The king reviewed them in great form—the fields were crowded with uniforms of grey, blue, red, or green, distinguishing the several troops—the streets bristled with muskets and carbines on the respective “field-days,” and, on Sundays, the volunteers marched to their parish church with their band of martial music at their head.

Many an honest tradesman owed his downfall to this warlike mania. First came an outlay for the uniform—an expensive uniform it was too, by the way; then there was a charge for the cleaning of the arms and accoutrements; then, decked out in full regimentals, our tradesman had to repair on stated days to exercise, and thus the shop was deserted, and business dwindled down till the ardent volunteer appeared in the *Gazette*, not, be it understood, in the list of Military Promotions, but in that of “B—pts.” Cheerful times they were, nevertheless—the sun shining, the band playing, the colours flying, and ecstatic urchins shouting from very joy, while the valiant sons of Mercury, Thespis, Themis, and Saint Crispin—adopted for the nonce by Mars—went through their exercise. But, ye gods of war and victory, watch over and guide them, lest yon second Marlborough, who retails rushlights and red-herrings in Shoreditch, or that gaudy



sergeant—born to rival Wolfe—who is a dealer in tripe and trotters, betray his calling, and talk about business and the shop! Direct their evolutions, or perchance the tailor, who never handled a heavier weapon than a needle, may ground his musket upon his comrade's toe, and prevent his "standing at ease;" or the cheesemonger next to him may singe the whiskers of his commanding officer with the charge he is cramming into the barrel of his gun! The duty and the danger are over, and now, off to the dinner of your corps, brave volunteers! You have distinguished yourselves, gentlemen, to-day, and *might* have distinguished yourselves much more, had an enemy dared to face you—your country thanks you. Talk of an enemy, indeed! Ha! ha! It was probably from respect to your prowess—possibly from other causes—that the French never honoured us with a visit, and that, at the conclusion of the war, your forces were disbanded without having had a skirmish with the foe, notwithstanding the many alarms of invasion which had drawn you shivering—with cold, and chattering—of glory, from your beds and counters.

But the volunteers must not be laughed at; independent of the vanity which may have enlisted some into their ranks, there was, it must not be denied, a spirit of patriotism abroad, and an enthusiastic determination among all classes to defend their hearths and homes against the foe.

The same noble spirit was evinced in the subscriptions set on foot by the City of London, in 1759, for granting bounties to seamen and landsmen who would join the king's service, in addition to the offer of the freedom of the City to them, after a service of three years, or at the

conclusion of the war, if it were brought to a close earlier; and in the subscription started by the Grand Jury of Suffolk for building a ship of the line, in 1782, which soon amounted to seventeen thousand five hundred pounds! It was the same noble spirit that actuated other cities and boroughs to follow the example of London, and offer similar "bounties;" and, in 1798, it again showed itself in the shape of "free gifts" to the government for the protection of the country. On January the 30th, 1798, the king presented twenty thousand pounds out of his privy purse as a "free gift;" in September, the managers of several provincial theatres gave a benefit for the same fund on the first and last nights of the season; in the same month, a subscription opened by the Bank of England amounted to nearly two hundred thousand pounds: and the total amount thus voluntarily raised was a million and a half sterling by the 28th of September!

The bounties offered by government were, in 1782—for every able seaman, five pounds; ordinary seamen, fifty shillings each; and able-bodied landmen, thirty shillings; which was increased in the same year by an additional bounty offered by the East India Company, of three guineas each to able seamen, two guineas to ordinary seamen, and a guinea and a half to landmen, to the number of two thousand of each class. At the same court, this munificent company ordered three 74-gun ships to be built and presented to the king's service. The highest bounty ever known, amounted, in 1793, to thirteen pounds: namely, five pounds from government, two pounds from the City of London, two pounds from the Charter House, two pounds from the Trinity House, and two pounds from the Jockey Club.

But there were other less constitutional, but still necessary, ways resorted to for raising the forces and the supplies. Additional taxes were imposed upon every imaginable luxury, and additional duties upon articles of consumption not absolutely necessary.

In 1787, the duty on shops, or "Shop tax," returned to the revenue no smaller a sum than one hundred and eight thousand pounds, of which Scotland paid eight hundred; London and Westminster forty-two thousand; Bath and Bristol one thousand; and the other cities, towns, &c., of England, fifty-seven thousand.

In 1798, the following list of Assessed Taxes is given on the face of the collector's receipt:

Commutation Tax.  
 Old Window Tax.  
 House Tax.  
 Additional Duty on Inhabited Houses.  
 Male Servant.  
 Additional Duty on ditto.  
 Horse for Riding, &c.  
 Additional Duty on ditto.  
 Further Additional Duty on ditto.  
 Horse for Agriculture, &c.  
 Additional Duty on ditto.  
 Carriage with Four Wheels.  
 Carriage with Two Wheels.  
 Taxed Cart.  
 Dog.  
 Twenty per Cent. on the above Taxes.  
 Stamp for Receipts.  
 Clock.  
 Gold Watch.  
 Silver or Metal Watch.

The abuses which had crept into the regular army by this time would scarcely be credited were they not recorded by an authority so trustworthy as Sir Walter Scott, who thus describes them in an article occasioned by the



death of the Duke of York, in the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* of January the 10th, 1827:

“No science was required on the part of the candidate for a commission in the army: no term of service as a cadet, no previous experience whatever—the promotion went on equally unimpeded; the boy let loose from school last week might, in the course of a month, be a field-officer, if his friends were disposed to be liberal of money and influence. Others there were against whom there could be no complaint for want of length of service, although it might be difficult to see how their experience was improved by it. It was no uncommon thing for a commission to be obtained for a child in the cradle; and, when he came from college, the fortunate youth was at least a lieutenant of some standing by dint of fair promotion. To sum up this catalogue of abuses, commissions were in some instances bestowed upon young ladies, when pensions could not be had. We know ourselves one fair dame who drew the pay of captain in the — Dragoons, and was, probably, not much less fit for the service than some who, at that period, actually did duty; for, as we have said, no knowledge of any kind was demanded from the young officers; if they desired to improve themselves in the elemental parts of their profession, there were no means open, either of direction or instruction. But, as a zeal for knowledge rarely exists where its attainment brings no credit or advantage, the gay young men who adopted the military profession were easily led into the fashion of thinking that it was pedantry to be master even of the routine of the exercise which they were obliged to perform. An intelligent sergeant whispered from time to time the word of command, which his captain would have been ashamed to have known

without prompting, and thus the duty of the field-day was huddled over rather than performed."

We also have living portraits embalmed in the works of Smollett and Fielding, which show the state, not only of the Army, but also of the Navy and the Church—witness their Weazles and Bowlings, their Trullibers and Shuffles.

The severity exercised in the army at this time was excessive, although certainly justified to some extent by the necessity of preserving discipline during the wars; but what could the poor private expect from such officers as Scott has described, full of caprice and arrogance, enhanced by suddenly finding themselves in a position to command, and void of experience or knowledge of their duties? We find, in 1784, a Captain Kenneth Mackenzie, commander of a fort in Africa, so zealous on this point, that on a prisoner, one Kenneth Murray Mackenzie, a deserter, effecting his escape, he ordered the sentry who was on duty at the time to receive fifteen hundred lashes, and, on the runaway being found, he was, by the orders of his captain, tied to a cannon and blown to pieces. It is but justice to add, that the captain was, on December the 10th, 1784, tried at the Old Bailey, and convicted of the murder.

To secure hands for the army and navy, bodies of men were organised in addition to the ordinary recruiting service, namely, "kidnappers" for the army, and "press-gangs" to obtain recruits for the navy.

The kidnappers were not kept so much for the regular army—it was the East India Company's agents, who had regular depôts in town ready to receive the victims. That this service was not very lawfully performed, we may judge by the complaints made of the practices resorted to in

these crimping-houses. Thus, a man was found dead in Chancery-lane, when it was discovered that he had met his death in attempting to escape through the skylight of an East Indian depôt for recruits; at another time mysterious funerals at night were noticed in Saint Bride's Churchyard, in Fleet-street, and, no entries being made in the register, it was found upon inquiry that the bodies were brought from another depôt in the neighbourhood, where numbers of recruits who had been kidnapped were imprisoned, previous to a secret shipment to India. Even De Foe, on a journey into the West of England, only escaped by stratagem from an attempt made to kidnap him.

But we will give a specimen of the proceedings of the kidnappers from the *British Gazette and Sunday Monitor* of August the 4th, 1782:

"Wednesday evening one of the most horrid scenes was discovered near Leicester-fields that ever disgraced any civilised country. A young lad was perceived running from thence towards the Haymarket, and two or three fellows running after him, crying, 'Stop thief!' Some of the passengers no sooner stopped him as such, than he told them he was no thief, but had been kidnapped by his pursuers, who had chained him in a cellar with about nine more, in order to be shipped off for India; and that he had made his escape so far by mere desperation, swearing he would run the first through with a penknife he held open in his hand. The youth was instantly liberated, and the whole fury of the populace fell on his kidnapping pursuers, one of whom was heartily ducked in the Mews pond. All the remaining youths were taken from the place of confinement, by the intervention of the populace. Those robbers of human flesh, it seems, not



only intoxicate country lads till they can confine them, but have been known to stop people in the streets, and carry them to their horrid dens, under the various pretences of [their] being deserters, pickpockets, &c. They likewise attend register offices, and hire raw youths there for servants, whom they immediately confine, and *sell* them either to the military or to the India kidnapping contractors. The master of this infamous house behaved in a most insolent manner before Justice Hyde, and was committed to the watchhouse black-hole till this day at eleven o'clock, when he is to be re-examined."

We learn two facts from this extract. In the first place, it is gratifying to observe that the system of kidnapping was not openly recognised, but seems to have been treated as unlawful: and, by another passage we find that it was not only for the East Indian military service that it was resorted to, but that the wretched victims were sometimes sold into a kind of slavery. The practice still continued also of kidnapping and selling country youths to the captains of trading vessels to America, who again disposed of them for a series of years to planters in Pennsylvania and the other North American colonies, where their condition of bondage has been feelingly told in the well-known "*Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman.*"

A very similar occurrence to that quoted happened in the same neighbourhood six years afterwards, and is thus recorded in the *Craftsman* of January the 5th, 1788:

"Saturday evening, about nine o'clock, a most uncommon scene presented itself near Charing Cross, viz., a young man about eighteen, in his shirt, with a hot poker in his hand, running full speed, and two crimps pursuing him, crying out 'Murder!' and 'Stop thief!' It seems the lad being obstreperous, had been put to bed about

eight o'clock for security, but that after forcing open the chamber door, he rushed into the tap-room, and seizing the poker that was then in the fire, defended himself against upwards of a dozen crimps and others, some of whom were much bruised. The lad was stopped in Saint Martin's-lane, but soon rescued by the populace, who had the additional satisfaction of seeing one of the kidnappers severely drubbed by a butcher, who, it seems, had been in a similar situation with the young lad but a short time ago. The former had been met with coming out of a register office, and trepanned under the pretence of carrying a letter to the house where he had been detained."

After this, we may almost reconcile ourselves to the milder atrocities of the press-gangs, which picked up merchant-seamen (whose wages—from 45s. to 55s. per month in 1776—from the scarcity of them, were high in comparison with the rates in the royal navy), and even, if the press were very "hot," landsmen were seized and carried off, if in London, to the tender off the Tower, for the naval service. Such paragraphs as the one we here copy from the "Historical Chronicle" of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1754, were at that time common:

"Impress warrants being issued out, the press was very brisk at Cowes, and in the harbour, and a great many useful hands were picked up."

Another extract, from *Lloyd's Evening Post and English Chronicle* of January 29th, 1777, will show that there existed some competition between the press-gangs and the kidnappers:

"Yesterday a terrible affray happened at a public-house near Ratcliffe Highway between a party of kidnappers and a press-gang. The quarrel arose about enlisting a man

that had been at sea, who, upon his discovering to a sailor, then drinking in the house, the artifices made use of to trepan him, and declaring his preferring the sea to the land service, the honest tar went for a press-gang, who soon decided the quarrel by giving the kidnappers a hearty drubbing."

These press-gangs were sometimes of still greater service. The following is no isolated case:

"On Friday night, a press-gang, having received intelligence of a house near Poplar, where the thieves skulk till the evening, when they commence their depredations, went very unexpectedly and surrounded the house, from which they took seventeen, and carried them away to the tender at the Tower."—*Old British Spy*, September 21, 1782.

The pathetic scenes attendant upon this necessary but arbitrary method of manning the navy were very frequent: the sailor who had just returned from a long voyage was subject to be torn from his family and shipped off to a longer cruise or a foreign station; homeward-bound ships, coming up the Channel, were boarded and their crews carried away, only a sufficient number of hands being left to navigate the vessel; families were left to bewail the sudden abstraction of a husband, a father, a son, or a brother; women, with large families left unprovided for, to be received in the streets, the workhouse, or the gaol.

In the neighbourhood of the seaports, contests might frequently be seen going on between a press-gang, headed by a petty officer, and a merchant-seaman, or perhaps a landsman; loud altercations in the streets between the press-gang and some sailor who claimed to be a master, mate, or apprentice, but who had not got the papers with him which exempted him; and, in some obscure garret in



a sailor's lodging-house, Jack Tar might be seen, in expectation of the visit of a press-gang, heating a poker in the fire to give them a warm reception.

But, even when overpowered by numbers, and carried off, disarmed and pinioned, to the depôt, Jack did not always give up hope or resistance. Here are two instances, the first from the "Annual Register" for 1759:

"*May 14th.*—Thirty impressed men on board a tender at Sunderland forcibly made their escape. The bravery of the leader is remarkable, who, being hoisted upon deck by his followers, wrested the halbert from the sentinel on duty, and, with one hand defended himself, while, with the other, he let down a ladder into the hold, for the rest to come up, which they did, and overpowered the crew."

"*June 22nd.*—Was the hottest press for seamen on the Thames that has been known since the war began—*no regard being paid to protections*—and upwards of two hundred swept away. The crew of the *Prince of Wales*, a letter of marque ship, stood to their arms, and saved themselves by their resolution."—*Annual Register for 1758.*

The royal navy, with all its impressed forces, was not considered sufficient to secure the safety of the British merchantmen, and, though whole fleets of vessels were compelled to wait at the outports till a frigate came to protect or "convoy" them on their voyage, and had to lie again for a convoy to conduct them back, French or Spanish men-of-war would often carry off some richly-freighted Indiaman, and the commanders of the convoy would find one occasionally missing from their flock, which had sailed too wide away in the night, and been carried into port by the foe. To retaliate in the same coin, the government permitted private individuals to fit

out vessels for the purpose of making reprisals, and, as they would now and then capture a valuable ship and cargo, it was not an unprofitable speculation, and was eagerly entered into, either by individuals or "Reprisal Societies." These privateers and "letters of marque," as they were called from the licenses furnished to them, seem to have been slightly given to piratical practices, as in the following instance, reported in the "Annual Register" for 1759:

*"April 3rd.*—Two gentlemen, passengers from Holland, landed at Margate. They affirm they were in the evening boarded in sight of the North Foreland by an English privateer cutter, whose crew, in disguise, confined the captain and crew of their vessel in the cabin, and then plundered it of goods to the value of two thousand pounds, demanded the captain's money, and took what the passengers had."

In 1758, the number of privateers was so great that scarcely a French ship dare leave the harbours, and in the absence of legitimate prizes, they attacked and plundered the vessels of neutral countries. Thus, "a Dutch vessel," says Smollett, "having on board the baggage and domestics of the Marquis de Pignatelli, ambassador from the court of Spain to the King of Denmark, was boarded three times successively by the crews of three different privateers, who forced the hatches, rummaged the hold, broke open and rifled the trunks of the ambassador, insulted and even cruelly bruised his officers, stripped his domestics, and carried off his effects, together with letters of credit and a bill of exchange."

These repeated aggressions upon neutral vessels calling forth a perfect tempest of remonstrance and complaint, a bill was passed, declaring any vessel of less burden than

one hundred tons, carrying less than ten three-pounders, and having a smaller complement than forty men, ineligible as a privateer, except by special permission, and also regulating the registry and control of this large and ill-conditioned force.

Apropos of privateers, as a mere trifling matter, but yet peculiar to the time, we find in a long list of them the favourite names appear to have been such as *The Charming Polly*, *Lovely Sukey*, *Pretty Peggy*, *Sweet Sally*, *Lovely Nancy*, *Miss Betty*, &c., &c.; and both in the lists of shipping and of marriages in the magazines of the time, we find these now vulgar contractions or corruptions of female names. This by the way, as a specimen of defunct tastes.

The newspapers of the last century teem with evidences of foreign war. The arrival of "the Convoy from the West Indies" is as regularly chronicled (and with much more of significant congratulation) as is now the arrival of the West India mail; the *Gazette* is crammed with despatches announcing a "splendid victory," or "glorious action," lists of killed and wounded, divisions of prize-money, and sailings of fleets, journals of sieges, embarkations of troops, battles, skirmishes, engagements, and captures. Now and then a mutiny breaks out among the French prisoners who are lying at some of the ports waiting for an exchange by cartel; or we read of French officers breaking their paroles of honour and escaping home.

These French prisoners, of whom the *Universal Magazine* of October, 1747, says "there are not less than twelve thousand in England," deluged the market with fancy articles—thread-papers, made of Indian straw, pin-



cushions, work-boxes, hair chains, toys, and a hundred different articles of *bijouterie*, by which they contrived to earn a trifle to carry home when the cartel was arranged between the two nations, and they were exchanged for an equal number of English prisoners. These articles, which used to crowd the sideboards of our grandsires, were a part of the curiosities incidental to the continued wars of the last century, and we must find them a corner in our museum accordingly.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## POLITICS.

WE have already hinted at the intensity of political feeling in the last century, which carried partisanship from the coffee and chocolate-house to the theatre, and even the inner recesses of the lady's chamber, and induced the zealous beauty to proclaim her principles by the position of the patches of court-plaister on her face, and by the seat which she took at the playhouse.

In the discussion of some question of state, fathers, Brutus-like, sacrificed their children, tradesmen neglected their business, and friends fought and slew each other. But, after all, the coffee-house was the arena of political discussion. Addison mentions "the inner parlour of the 'Grecian'" as the resort of a knot of furious politicians who weighed every measure brought forward in parliament, canvassed every notice in the *Gazette*, and doubted the efficacy of every treaty that was signed. In 1724, we find the "Cocoa Tree," or "Ozinda's," distinguished as the resort of Tory politicians, and the "Saint James's" for its Whig frequenters. De Foe says, "A Whig will no more go to the Cocoa Tree, or Ozinda's, than a Tory will be seen at the coffee-house of Saint James's." Towards the latter part of the century this rage was in nowise abated, for Goldsmith, in the "Citizen of the

World," writes: "An Englishman, not satisfied with finding by his own prosperity the contending powers of Europe properly balanced, desires also to know the precise value of every weight in either scale. To gratify this curiosity, a leaf of political instruction is served up every morning with tea; when our politician has feasted upon this, he repairs to a coffee-house, in order to ruminate upon what he has read, and increase his collection; from thence he proceeds to the ordinary, inquires 'What news?' and treasuring up every requisition there, hunts about all the evening in quest of more, and carefully adds it to all the rest. Thus, at night, he returns home, full of the important advices of the day: when, lo! waking next morning, he finds the instructions of yesterday a collection of absurdity or palpable falsehood. This one would think a mortifying repulse in the pursuit of wisdom, yet our politician, noway discouraged, hunts on, in order to collect fresh materials, and in order to be again disappointed."

In the days of Swift we may find, from the very cautious character of his correspondence, and the equivocal and often hieroglyphical language of his friends in writing to him, as well as from frequent direct allusions to the fact, that the public post was not held sacred during these times of hot partisanship, but that the correspondence of parties supposed to be at all of different views from the government was repeatedly intercepted and opened. This system appears to have prevailed alike through the successive administrations of Godolphin, Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Walpole; discreditable and repulsive to our English feelings, it was, perhaps, tolerated more easily through the very intensity of the passion for politics, which disposed both parties to recognise the rule



that all schemes were justifiable which led to the desired end in this trial of strength—the impeachment of the one or the other party's minister.

We must bear in mind that, throughout the century, there was a continual supply of food for this passion to feed upon. Twelve years had but elapsed at its commencement, since a revolution, entirely altering the dynasty, and settling the constitution on a surer religious and political basis, and which affected the destiny of the country so materially that it required some time to adjust matters on the footing which was deemed to be the safest to the nation, and still longer to reconcile men's minds to the new order of things—to soften down asperities, and to obliterate prejudices; people had hardly ascertained what reforms they were to expect—what liberties were to be given to them. Then the death of two successive sovereigns without issue, rendered another change in the line of monarchs inevitable, and the Hanoverian succession was at length fixed upon. This caused a protracted struggle between the old Stuart party, who saw a prospect of returning to power when Anne sat on the throne without issue, and left it a legacy for contention, and the partisans of the new line, which, settled by arms in 1715, was again renewed with great energy in 1745. Another fruitful source of discussion was found in the continued foreign wars, and our being almost throughout the century involved in disputes with the neighbouring courts. The violent writings of Wilkes, Junius, and Sampson Perry, helped to keep the flame alive, and the greater efforts the government made to reduce it by adopting rigorous proceedings against those writers, the fiercer it burned—the attorney-general and the judges were merely pouring water upon burning oil. The dispute with our revolted

colonies in America, and their subsequent successful struggle for independence, divided the nation into two parties; and, finally, the century closed upon a state of anarchy and confusion which, breaking out with the French Revolution, had spread epidemically over almost the entire continent, leaving it doubtful where or when it would be stemmed, and leaving England engaged in a vigorous attempt to restore the distribution of power, which had been so wildly upset, for the better security and peace of Europe. This was a period well adapted to draw out great statesmen from among the heterogeneous mass collected in parliament, and Bolingbroke, Harley, Walpole, North, Chatham, Pitt, Burke, Fox, and Canning, were alternately thrown up on the surface of the troubled waters.

But in every coffee-house, from Saint James's to the Royal Exchange, and in every tavern in the city, there were rival statesmen, who were settling the gravest affairs of the nation, under the soothing or inspiring effects (as the case might require) of tea, coffee, cocoa, chocolate, punch, or purl. Particular boxes in the coffee-house were allotted to little knots of these sage politicians, or a particular room retained by a more influential club of them. Associations for the solving of great state problems sat nightly at every tavern, and energetically protested against, or warmly supported the measures of the government. A hatter from Cheapside would come down to his club prepared to pay off the national debt, as he paid off his own debts—on paper. A Cornhill tailor, who was ignorant of his domestic duties, would find fault with duties imposed by the government. A cutler, who was a member of some loyal volunteer corps, would be prepared to show that some besieged general was entirely ignorant

of the art of fortification ; or a man living by his wits, and who had no principle in himself, would come and spout by the hour together in opposition to a government measure, but only objected to it on "principle." A draper would deliver speeches by the yard, as conjurers vomit ribbons, or mine host himself called to their councils, would, perhaps, more concisely "come to the pint ;" whilst a druggist, who was looked upon as the professional member of the club, would enter into an explanation of his "scruples." Some of these clubs were of importance, and created a sensation in the political world. There was the "Jacobite Club," for the restoration of the exiled Stuarts—the "London Corresponding Society, united for a reform of Parliament"—the "Constitutional Society," advocating the cause of the revolted colonies, or "plantations," in America—the "Supporters of the Bill of Rights"—the "Society of the Friends of the Liberty of the Press," of which Sheridan was a member; and a host of others, which had some pretensions to importance and respectability.

The programme of the evening's discussion was frequently advertised in the public papers, when the club was understood to be a controversial or open debating club; but one or two specimens of these announcements will suffice :

† "Society for Free Debate, Queen's Arms, Newgate-street.—The questions to be argued here this evening are as follows, viz., 'Are not the Severe Laws by which the Soldiery of England are governed, dangerous to British Liberty?' and 'Ought Great Britain to give up the Dependency of America, or declare War with France?' The chair will be taken at eight o'clock."—*Gazetteer of October 24, 1778.*



The subjects announced for discussion at the Capel-court Debates, held in Bartholomew-lane, every Monday evening (the admission to which was sixpence), were—"1788, August 4th: 'Between which Characters is the Resemblance most Striking, Mr. Pitt and Sir Robert Walpole, or Mr. Fox and Oliver Cromwell?'"—and, "August 11th: 'Which is the greatest Domestic Evil, a Drunken Husband or a Scolding Wife?'" Here was variety of subject!

Fielding, in his *Covent Garden Journal*, Nos. 8 and 9, satirises the style and composition of these clubs, and the passion of the 'prentices and clerks, of whom they often consisted, for grasping questions beyond their scope, and gives a mock journal of (the "Robinhoodians," in which patten-makers, shoemakers, tailors, barbers, weavers, and a boatswain's mate, are the orators.

At some of these meetings, held in obscure garrets, some miserable conspiracy against the government was seriously projected now and then, and when, on the information of one of the members, a picket of guards or a few constables were brought to break in upon their discussion, these valorous spirits would clamber hastily out at the trap-door, and, scampering over the tiles in their anxiety to escape, literally risk their lives in the service of their country. Debating societies, vulgarly dubbed "Spouting Clubs," were much affected by the 'prentices and shop-boys of London; and Mr. Dickens, in his "*Barnaby Rudge*," has very happily sketched one of these deliberative assemblies and some of its prominent characters, at the time of the riots of '80.

That political feeling was wrought up to an immense pitch we have said enough to indicate, but we have yet to bring forward another and more striking instance, which shows that party feeling was displayed even over the grave,

and that the challenges of faction were uttered by the most demure personages on the most solemn of occasions. At the funeral of the Earl of Chatham, on June the 9th, 1798, in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, Pitt, Burke, Dunning, &c., the Bishop of Rochester read the following epitaph after the funeral service in Westminster Abbey, "with an energy truly pathetic:"

Embalmed  
 In the grateful Memory  
 Of his Country,  
 Here rest the remains  
 Of the Great Commoner  
 The Right Honourable  
 W I L L I A M P I T T,  
 By all Europe revered;  
 But a profligate  
 Administration,  
 Who succeeded to his Office  
 Without his Talents  
 Or his Virtues,  
 Made shipwreck of Government.  
 Their ambition and their plans  
 Were different :  
 It was his to Subdue the Common Enemy—  
 Theirs to Enslave  
 Their Country.  
 Rest, indignant shade,  
 Under this Consolation—  
 That thy great Renown shall be lasting  
 As their Infamy.

Such, then, being the state of popular feeling, we may easily conceive to what excesses it rose during the protracted period of a parliamentary election at that time. We have before us a whole volume of lampoons, squibs, and political pasquinades, preserved from the great contested election for Yorkshire, in March, 1784, between Duncombe and Wilberforce on the Bute side, and Folljambe and Weddel, whose hand-bills denounced at one fell swoop "North, Fox, Coalition, and the India Bill."

Another and thicker volume contains the squibs and songs written for the election for the City of York, for which Lord John Cavendish and Sir William Milner came forward in the Fox interest, and Lord Galway and R. S. Milnes in opposition. We may quote one or two (by no means the most intemperate of the collection), by way of sample:

"No Bribery, No Corruption, No Bludgeons, No Colliers, No Aristocratical Blows, No Threats, No Compulsion, No Fox, No Coalition; but Freedom of Election, Independence, the Peace of the City, and Galway and Milnes for ever. Huzza!"

Here is another, levelled personally against Lord John Cavendish:

"*York, March 26th, 1784.*—Received of my Constituents of the City of York, their hearty and unfeigned disapprobation of my Conduct, which, not being of the Value of Forty Shillings, is not, '*according to Act of Parliament,*' liable to the tax.—J. C."\*

"*York, April 8th, 1784.*—To be Sold by the Kidnapping Parson,† in the 'Apollo,' at the 'George,' in Coney-street, on Wednesday, the 7th inst., at twelve o'clock at noon precisely, a large lot of firm and lasting Resentment against Lord North (the property of Lord John Cavendish). As it has been basely adulterated by a mixture of the Coalition, it will be Sold so Cheap that a Stamp Receipt will not be necessary. N.B.—His Lordship's friends advised him to put up his Duplicity in the above Lot,

\* This was a sly hit at the New Receipt Stamp Act, of which Lord John Cavendish was in favour.

† The Reverend Mr. Marsh, accused of kidnapping Galway and Milnes's voters.



but, as he thinks it may yet be of Service to him, he was not willing to part with it."

"To be Sold by Auction! Who bids more than the Comptroller? Agoing! Agoing! A fine, smart, dapper, Hibernian Orator, at the shameful price of a turnspit to the Jacobites! Agoing, gentlemen, agoing!—shameful little busybody! View him! Hear him harangue the mob! Gentlemen, consider he is worth more than that to pay his expenses in the Diligence, and send him round the country to talk as much in favour of Addresses as he has heretofore calumniated them. Fine change! Besides, gentlemen, if you do not bid more honourably, he will possibly tack about and endeavour to gain a petition for the removal of those he now calls his friends. Nobody bids more—Knock the Doctor off!"

The different species of threats had recourse to are illustrated in the following handbills:

"MR. MOLLETT,—I desire you will give me one vote at least for the ensuing election; that is, either for Lord John Cavendish or Sir William Milner. If you refuse, you must give up being my tenant.—R. SYKES. Tuesday, March 30th. (Addressed) Mr. Mollett, Swinegate."

"In a few days will be published, *The Black List*: an account of such freemen of York as promised their votes to Lord John Cavendish and Sir William Milner, or one of them, and afterwards polled for Lord Galway and Mr. Milnes. By which will be proved that the inhabitants of this city possess the greatest share of consistency, veracity, gratitude, and public spirit of any men on earth."

The elections in which John Wilkes figured as a candidate, and was returned in defiance of the House of Commons which had rejected him, were productive of still more paper warfare; but we must go to Hogarth after all

for the best illustration of a parliamentary election of the last century. In his admirable series of *The Feast, The Canvass, The Polling, and The Chairing*, he has described all that can be described of a contested election. But there is little to point out which is *peculiar* to the period, beyond the costume. Let our readers carefully scan them, and say whether every feature of bribery, corruption, intimidation, personation, and perjury have done more than *fade* in a similar scene of modern days—they have yet to *disappear*. Are they not all still practised, though, perhaps, not so openly nor so boldly? Is not very nearly the same *amount* of corruption going on, though invisibly, and for a shorter space of time?

These matters are, however, now managed differently: we hear no such public offers made as in the following advertisement, which we extract from the *London Evening Post* of October the 1st, 1774, on the issuing of the writs for the new parliament:

“BOROUGH.—A gentleman of character and fortune, who wishes to avoid contention and trouble, would be glad of a compromise against an ensuing period. A line to Mr. Dormer, at 24, Ludgate-hill, will meet with the most honourable attention.”—*Verbum sap.!*

Perhaps the science of corruption was never so closely studied or so well understood as under the government of Sir Robert Walpole. In the last ten years of his administration, the secret service money, which, in the ten years from 1707 to 1717—none of the purest—had been 337,960*l.*, had run up to 1,453,400*l.* It is even said that, when a majority was doubtful, the members of parliament who were invited to this minister's parliamentary dinners might occasionally find a five-hundred pound-note folded up in their napkins.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CRIME AND PETTY OFFENCES.

THE impression which one would form from a glance at the newspapers of the time would be that the Eighteenth Century was a completely lawless age—so frequent, so daring, and so violent are the offences which they record against property and person. Life was as insecure in the very neighbourhood of London, despite the exertions of the valiant, buff-coated “City trained bands” (then, to be sure, falling into decay and disrepute), as it is now in the remotest wilds of England, and, in the country, it was only to be protected by the force of arms. Those were, indeed, the “good old times,” of which, as Wordsworth has sung of an earlier period,

The simple plan,  
That they should take who have the power,  
And they should keep who can,

was the order of the day, and the rule by which, in a great measure, society seems still to have been governed. Yet the laws were very severe, and rigidly enforced; but they were insufficient to repress or restrain the excesses that a lax system of police had given impunity to.

Robbery on the highway by mounted highwaymen,



armed with pistols—or footpads, with cutlasses, knives, or hangers, was the occurrence of every hour of the day and night. There were “flying highwaymen,” so called from the speed with which they travelled (as the celebrated Dick Turpin), and which enabled them to appear almost simultaneously at places wide apart, thus giving them a semblance of ubiquity, baffling pursuit, and defying precaution; “gentlemen highwaymen,” who took to the road with a sort of chivalrous enthusiasm (as Tom King), and were particularly polite and gallant to ladies (like Claude Duval), gracefully requesting them to deliver up their valuables, and restoring to them any article that was dear to them, apologising for the alarm they had occasioned, and courteously wishing them good night and a pleasant journey; coarse, ruffianly highwaymen (of the Blueskin stamp), who bluntly demanded “Your money or your life!” or savagely ordered you to “Stand and deliver!” and “generous highwaymen,” who, like Rob Roy Macgregor of old, levied contributions from the rich to distribute among the poor. In fact, the romance with which these outrages were invested, gave to the character of the brigand a sort of charm in the eyes of the vulgar, which has survived even to our own day; for we all know the avidity with which the stories of Jack Sheppard, Richard Turpin, Sixteen-String Jack, and Paul Clifford, have been devoured by the public. We might borrow from these histories a description of the daring exploits of the freebooters of whose deeds they tell, but there is no occasion to quote from romance—the newspapers can tell us quite enough. It was not only on Hampstead Heath, Bagshot, Finchley Common, Epping Forest, Hounslow Heath, Shooter’s Hill, and Blackheath that the traveller had to dread the robber’s pistol: Whitechapel, Holborn, the

Strand, and Shoreditch were all infested; Piccadilly was dangerous after dark; Clerkenwell and Islington next to impassable. We are not exaggerating; history bears out our assertions. A design was formed in 1728 to stop the coach of the Queen of George the Second, on her way to Saint James's, as she returned from a supper in the City, and rob her of her jewels; George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York were stopped one night on their way home in a hackney-coach, and robbed in Berkeley-square; in 1772, Doctor Dodd, who was afterwards hung for forgery, was stopped by a single highwayman "near Pancras," who fired at him and robbed him, and was executed for the offence at Tyburn on the 20th of January, 1773.

Such was the state of things in 1744, that the lord mayor and aldermen of London carried an address to the king, representing that "divers confederacies of great numbers of evil-disposed persons, armed with bludgeons, pistols, cutlasses, and other dangerous weapons, infest not only the private lanes and passages, but likewise the public streets and places of usual concourse, and commit most daring outrages upon the persons of your majestie's good subjects, whose affairs oblige them to pass through the streets, by terrifying, robbing, and wounding them; and these acts are frequently perpetrated at such times as were heretofore deem'd hours of security." The address concluded with the following prayer: "Permit us, Sir, to express our hopes that a speedy, rigorous, and exemplary execution of the laws upon the persons of offenders, as they shall fall into the hands of justice, may, under your majestie's princely wisdom, conduce greatly to the suppressing these enormities, by striking terror into the wicked, and preventing others entering into such evil

courses." To which the king replied, "Nothing shall be wanting on my part to put the laws in execution, to support the magistrates rigorously to punish such heinous offenders."

Smollett gives us a similar account: "Thieves and robbers were now become more desperate and savage than ever they had appeared since mankind was civilised. In the exercise of their rapine, they wounded, maimed, and even murdered the unhappy sufferers through a wantonness of barbarity." And he thus accounts for this lawlessness: "This defect, in a great measure, arose from an absurd notion that laws necessary to prevent those acts of cruelty, violence, and rapine, would be incompatible with the liberty of British subjects; a notion that confounds all distinctions between liberty and brutal licentiousness, as if that freedom was desirable in the enjoyment of which people find no security for their lives or effects."

Fielding, in his "Inquiry into the Causes of the Increase of Robbers," draws a terrible picture of the audacity of these predatory gangs:

"Have not," he asks, "some of these (known highwaymen) committed robberies in open daylight, in the sight of many people, and have afterwards rode silently and triumphantly through the neighbouring towns without any danger or molestation? This happens to every rogue who has become eminent for his audaciousness, and is thought to be desperate; and is, in a more particular manner, the case of great and numerous gangs, many of which have for a long time committed the most open outrages in defiance of the law. Officers of justice have owned to me that they have passed by such with warrants in their pockets against them, without daring to apprehend them; and, indeed, they could not be blamed for



not exposing themselves to sure destruction, for it is a melancholy truth that, at this very day, a rogue no sooner gives the alarm within certain purlieus, than twenty or thirty armed villains are found ready to come to his assistance."

In 1752, Walpole writes Sir Horace Mann: "One is forced to travel, even at noon, as if one were going to battle."

"London is really dangerous at this time," writes Shenstone to Jago (March, 1744); "the pickpockets, formerly content with mere filching, make no scruple to knock people down with bludgeons in Fleet-street and the Strand, and that at no later hour than eight o'clock at night; but, in the Piazzas, Covent Garden, they come in large bodies, armed with *couteaus*, and attack whole parties, so that the danger of coming out of the play-houses is of some weight in the opposite scale, when I am disposed to go to them oftener than I ought."

Colonel Landmann, in his "Adventures and Recollections," relates, that on one fine Sunday afternoon, about 1790, as a gentleman sat on his terrace at Blackheath, among hosts of promenaders, a fashionably-dressed person, mounted on a fine horse, rode up, and exclaiming aloud, "How are you, my dear fellow? What a long time it is since you gave me a call! Come and dine with me to-morrow; you will meet some good fellows,"—added, in a fierce "aside," that, if he did not quietly deliver up his watch and purse, he was a dead man, at the same time drawing a pistol stealthily from his pocket. The gentleman knew that there was no resource but to comply; and the highwayman exclaiming aloud that he was "a damned good fellow," cantered gaily away unsuspected.

Horace Walpole relates a similar story to Mann (September 30th, 1750):—"I was sitting in my own dining-room on Sunday night—the clock had not struck eleven—when I heard a loud cry of 'Stop thief!' A highwayman had attacked a post-chaise in Piccadilly, within fifty yards of the house. The fellow was pursued, rode over the watchman, almost killed him, and escaped."

To illustrate these facts by giving all the extracts we possess confirmatory of them, would be impossible within the compass of the present chapter; we shall therefore content ourselves with publishing a few of the most remarkable. But first let us show how significantly the danger is told in the reports of the means taken to provide against it.

In 1763, the "Annual Register" states, under the date of "October 21st: A horse patrol, under the direction of Sir John Fielding, is fixed upon the several roads near the metropolis, for the protection of his majesty's subjects. The patrol consists of eight persons, well mounted and armed." This, however, appears to have been quite ineffectual; for, in 1780, we find from a "History of the Parish of Clerkenwell," that "it was customary for travellers coming to town to remain all night at the Angel, at Islington, rather than push forward in the dark, as the road was bad and infested by robbers." And further, "Persons walking from the City to Islington, in the evening, waited near the end of St. John-street, until a sufficient party had collected, who were then escorted by an armed patrol appointed for that purpose." We have already stated that the proprietors of Marybone and Ranelagh Gardens advertised "a suitable guard stationed upon the road;" that the stage-coaches were notified to be "well guarded;" and that, in 1729, passengers, even

through the streets of London, preferred walking to riding in a hackney-coach, "on account that they are in a readier posture to defend themselves, or call out for aid if attacked." We may add to these statements two notices issued by the proprietors of Sadler's Wells in 1783, as instances of the feeling of insecurity under which people must have laboured even in the suburbs. A programme of the entertainments winds up thus: "A horse patrol will be sent in the New-road, that night, for the protection of the nobility and gentry who go from the squares and that end of the town. The road also towards the City will be properly guarded."

"*June, 1783.*—Patrols of horse and foot are stationed from Sadler's Wells-gate, along the New-road, to Tottenham-court-road turnpike; likewise from the City-road to Moorfields. Also to St. John's-street, and across the Spaw-fields to Rosoman-row, from the hours of eight to eleven."

These were no groundless apprehensions, for not only were the highwaymen and footpads numerous, but they seemed to enjoy the wildest impunity. To quote instances from the lives and exploits of Turpin, Sheppard, or Claude Duval will be unnecessary, after giving a few passages in the life of Burnworth. After the attack of the gang, of which he was the leader, upon the Earl of Starborough, "the number of atrocious violations of the law which now daily took place alarmed all those who had a regard for order and good government, and the king issued a proclamation for apprehending the offenders, and a pardon was offered to any one who would impeach his accomplices, except Burnworth, who was justly considered as the principal of the gang. A proclamation was



issued, and 300*l.* offered for taking him into custody; but, notwithstanding this, he still appeared at large, and gave the following among other proofs of his audacity. Sitting down at the door of a public-house in Holborn, where he was well known, he called for a pint of beer, and drank it, holding a pistol in his hand by way of protection; he then went off with the greatest apparent unconcern." So says the "Newgate Calendar." But here is a still more striking instance of his effrontery: "On the approach of evening, he and his gang ventured towards London, and, having got as far as Turnmill-street, the keeper of Clerkenwell Bridewell happening to see them, called to Burnworth, and said he wanted to speak with him. Burnworth hesitated, but, the other assuring him that he intended no injury, and the thief being confident that his associates would not desert him, swore he did not regard the keeper, whom he advanced to meet with a pistol in his hand, the other miscreants walking on the opposite side of the street, armed with cutlasses and pistols. This singular spectacle attracted the attention of the populace; a considerable crowd soon gathered round them, on which Burnworth joined his companions, who now thought their safest plan would be to retreat towards the fields; wherefore they kept together, and, facing the people, retired in a body, presenting their pistols, and swearing they would fire on any who should offer to molest them."

The "considerable crowd" was evidently completely paralysed; not one among them ventured to contend for the 300*l.* reward! And, after this, must we not admit that "there is honour among thieves?" None of that desperate gang, which over and over again staked their

lives against a watch or a purse, cared to win 300*l.*, and, at the same time, purchase a pardon for themselves, by betraying their leader and accomplice!

But what must the fields have been to which this daring band retired? More dangerous, we should think, than the backwoods of America when colonisation first began! Burnworth's, however, is not the only case in which audacity has served to shield guilt and baffle even a superior force by striking it motionless with astonishment.

Here are a few of the paragraphs with which the newspapers of the time were filled:

"The postboy, coming with the Norwich mail from Epping, was stopped by the High Stone, near Leytonstone, about four in the morning, by a single highwayman, who took the bags, in all about eighteen, and rode off with full speed."—*Martin's Miscellany*, April, 1757.

"September 11*th.*—A gentleman was stopped in Holborn, about twelve at night, by two footpads, who, on the gentleman's making resistance, shot him dead, and then robbed him. Some of the villains have since been apprehended."—*Annual Register* for 1758.

"February 24*th.*—An apothecary in Devonshire-street, near Queen's-square, was, one night last month, attacked by two ruffians in Red Lion-street, who, presenting fire-arms and menacing him with death if he resisted or cried out, carried him to Black Mary's Hole, when, by the light of a lantern, perceiving that he was not the intended person, they left him there without robbing him. This mysterious transaction has not yet been cleared up, though they are suspected to be the same fellows who lately sent threatening letters to Mr. Nelson, an apothecary in Hol-

born, and another tradesman.”—*Annual Register for 1760.*

“One Richard Watson, tollman of Marybone turnpike, was found barbarously murdered in his toll-house; upon which, and some attempts made on other toll-houses, the trustees of turnpikes have come to a resolution to increase the number of toll-gatherers, and to furnish them with arms, strictly enjoining them at the same time not to keep any money at the toll-bars after eight o’clock at night.”—*July 23rd.—Annual Register for 1763.*

“A man was lately robbed and barbarously murdered on the road to Ratcliffe Cross. Finding but twopence in his pocket, they first broke one of his arms, then tied a great stone about his neck and threw him into a ditch, having first shot at and mangled his face in a most horrid manner. The unhappy man had, notwithstanding, scrambled out of the ditch into the road, but expired soon after he was found; and, two days after, another man was found murdered in the Mile-End-road.”—*October 17th.—Annual Register for 1763.*

“Murders, robberies (many of them attended with acts of cruelty), and threatening letters were never perhaps more frequent about this city than during this last month. One highwayman in particular, by the name of the ‘Flying Highwayman,’ engrosses the conversation of most of the towns within twenty miles of London, as he has occasionally visited all the public roads round the metropolis, and has collected several sums. He rides upon three different horses—a grey, a sorrel, and a black one—the last of which has a bald face, to hide which he generally hangs on a black cat’s-skin. He has leaped over Colnbrook turnpike a dozen of times within this fortnight, and is now well known to most of the turnpike-



men on the different roads about town.”—*December 31st.*  
—*Annual Register for 1761.*

“Sunday night, about ten o’clock, Mr. Morris, a linen-draper in Holborn, coming to town from Newington-butts, was knocked down near the Obelisk in St. George’s-fields by two footpads, who robbed him of his watch, three pounds in money, and a pair of silver buckles, which they took out of his shoes.”—*Westminster Journal, October 29, 1774.*

“On Thursday evening, the day of the Middlesex election, as Captain Stapleton, of New Bond-street, was returning to town from Richmond in a post-chaise, he was stopped near Gunnersbury-lane by two highwaymen, well mounted, who demanded his money; but the captain jocularly calling out ‘Wilkes and Glynn for ever!’ the highwaymen generously told him to drive on, and, declaring that they would never knowingly rob a friend to the public cause, proved that the sons of liberty are not destitute of honour, even when they descend to be thieves.”—*Westminster Journal, same day.*

This is indeed one of the oddities of the subject, reminding us of Jack Bannister, who was allowed to pass, with many apologies, by the pads who had stopped him, when they recognised the popular actor; but here is a more tragic tale, from the *Westminster Journal* of the same day:

“On Wednesday night, Mr. Wearing, silver-worker in Thames-street, was knocked down in the City-road by two footpads, who robbed him of his watch, and about two pounds. His skull is so terribly fractured that he now lies without hopes of recovery.”

“One highwayman has infested the roads between Hoddesdon and Hertford for seven weeks past. When

he has committed a robbery he takes shelter in the woods. He is often seen by the country people, who are afraid to attack him, as he is armed with a blunderbuss and two pair of pistols.”—*Public Advertiser*, June 16, 1775.

“Tuesday night, a gang of footpads made their appearance in the middle quarter of Moorfields, armed with pistols and cutlasses, and robbed every person that went that way until half an hour after nine, and then decamped to some other part. The last man they stopped having only a shilling in his pocket, they cut him across his head in a terrible manner. The inhabitants about Moorfields have come to a resolution of going armed in a body about their neighbourhood every night until eleven o’clock, to clear it of thieves.”—*Old British Spy*, September 21, 1782.

We have selected these extracts not so much on account of the audacity of the acts committed as for their brevity, and because most of them are authenticated with the names and addresses of the parties attacked ; and those from the “Annual Register” more especially, because we found the string of them already collected in Mr. Knight’s “London.”

But the “Knights of the Road” and “Gentlemen of the Pad” were not always professed thieves. Many a distressed tradesman resorted to the expedient for the nonce as the last desperate attempt to meet a bill falling due on the morrow, and instances were not rare of persons being stopped by men who, although disguised by crapes or masks, might be recognised by their voices, and who have robbed the travellers with a promise of returning the money at a certain place and hour, in a given time, on a pledge of secrecy—one which was generally fulfilled—as they “were in great want of the money in their business

for a few days." Or cases similar to the following now and then occurred, telling a sad tale of struggles against embarrassments :

"*January 6th.*—On Wednesday, Mr. Browar, print-cutter, near Aldersgate-street, was attacked on the road to Enfield by a single highwayman, whom he recollected to be a tradesman in the City. He accordingly called him by his name, when the robber shot himself through the head."—*Universal Magazine, February, 1775.*

Pretended robberies were also enacted, as it would appear from the following paragraph, which we take from the "Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer" of the *London Magazine for August, 1735*:

"*July 9th.*—*Saturday.*—A cheesefactor, who lives near Namptwich, and his brother, a cheesemonger in London, stood in the pillory at Warwick for a pretended robbery concerted between them; the one having robbed the other of two hundred guineas on the highway in order to sue the hundred for the said sum. They were, besides, fined fifty pounds each, and twenty pounds to defray the expenses of the county, and obliged to give three hundred pounds bail for their good behaviour for three years."

But, as this is the only case of the kind we have met with, we are perhaps no more justified in mentioning it as a characteristic of the century than any future chronicler might be in giving a recent case of sinking a ship for the sake of the insurance effected on it, as a characteristic offence of the present age.

One or two more instances of the audacity of highwaymen, and the spirit of romance in which they contrived to enwrap themselves, and (we wish we could say it in two senses) we have done with them :

"The notorious highwayman Turpin had formed a sort



of partnership with one King; they robbed in concert for some years, but the firm was dissolved rather tragically, in consequence of a horse having been stolen from a Mr. Major one Saturday night, which, through the exertions of a Mr. Boyes, was discovered at the Red Lion in White-chapel on the Monday. The brother of King went for it, was secured, and, being alarmed, told his detainers, on being promised his liberty, that there was a lusty man in a white duffil coat waiting for the horse in Red Lion-street. Mr. Boyes went out to look, and recognised King, and attempted to take him into custody. King, upon this, drew a pistol, and presented it at Mr. Boyes: it snapped, but did not go off. Turpin, who was close by, then rode up, when King called out to him, 'Dick, shoot, or we are taken, by G——!' Upon this Turpin fired, and missed the intended victim, but shot King, who exclaimed, 'Dick, you have killed me!' Turpin rode off, and King died a week afterwards of the wound."

The next extract relates to one of the class of "gentlemen highwaymen:"

"One MacLean, some years later than Turpin, was the great highwayman of the day. His gentlemanly deportment was extolled, and a sort of admiration kindled for him in the public mind; his crimes were gaily recounted by those who did not suffer from them; and the excited tales told produced no doubt a crop of young aspirants to succeed him on the road and at the gallows. The ladies took great notice of him while he was in Newgate, and kept him well supplied with money. He finally made his exit at Tyburn, with the brief prayer, 'Oh, God, forgive my enemies, bless my friends, and receive my soul!'"

We are indebted for these two contributions to Mr. D. M. Aird; and another informant, who "saw 'Sixteen-

String Jack' pass along the Oxford-road, on a hurdle, on his way to Tyburn for execution," gives us an idea of the almost princely style in which some of these highwaymen lived. She was the god-daughter of the wife of one Robert Martin, who appears to have been a famous mail-robber of his day, and was in the habit of occasionally paying long visits to her godmother, in the course of which she was surprised at the magnificence in which they lived. A sideboard of costly plate, and the constant attendance of a livery servant at meals, appear to have excited her wonder and admiration most forcibly. "But," to quote her own words, "young as I was, I thought there was something wrong. Martin would appear uneasy and fidgety at every knock at the door. I had also remarked that he was in the habit of leaving his home at night: his wife used in vain to implore him not to go. I have seen her cling to him, and, with tears in her eyes, exclaim, 'Now, Robert, do not go: you know what all this must end in!' But, disengaging himself from her, he used to depart, and I saw nothing more of him till the morning, when he looked haggard and fatigued. My mother, one day calling to see me, observed the same symptoms of a troubled conscience about him, and, in alarm, took me home; and, a short time afterwards, we heard that he had been apprehended, tried, and found guilty of a highway robbery. He was hanged at Tyburn, and his wife reduced to the greatest poverty."

These, then, we may conceive, were the days when travellers who lived within what is now a threepenny ride of the City, buckled on their weapons, and were armed *cap-à-pie*, before they left London for their homes; when gentlemen who understood the management of a pistol little better than their horses, rashly persisted in carrying

at least a brace in each coat-pocket, and sallied forth, overflowing with courage and with deadly thoughts of resistance floating in their brains—thoughts which floated out of their fingers' ends on the approach of a suspicious-looking horseman or a burly passer-by; when fireside stories all turned upon some midnight encounter with armed and daring robbers; and old ladies returning from taking a “dish of tea” with a friend, brimful of all the tales they had heard of their host's dispersing a mighty band single-handed, came hurrying through the streets, carefully shunning some dark court or gloomy alley, and raising their little lanterns to reconnoitre a suspicious object, which perhaps turned out to be a handpost or a pump—in fact, “shying” desperately at everything they could not see distinctly, coming to a dead halt, running round, turning back, or fairly “making a bolt of it.”

But undoubtedly this state of things was anything but entertaining to the parties concerned, for robbery was then a system of regular and business-like organisation. The highwaymen had their meeting-rooms, where the designs of robberies were discussed and matured; their regular beats, rides, or walks, which were generally honourably observed; their caverns and places of secrecy for the lodgment of their booty and division of their spoils, in secluded parts; and, it would even seem, they kept regular ledger accounts of their transactions, for we find in the *Westminster Journal* of February the 19th, 1774, the following statement:

“Friday, those two notorious fellows, Overend and Whitall, who some time since broke out of the New Gaol, Southwark, and for the apprehending whom a very considerable reward was offered by the high-sheriff of the county of Surrey, were, by the vigilance of Sir John



Fielding's people, taken into custody at a house in Long-lane, and committed to New Prison. On searching their apartments, a book was found containing an account of the robberies they have since committed."

Robberies attended with violence were more frequent and various than had ever been known. Every means to entrap the unwary was adopted. Thus we read of cellar flaps being suddenly let down as the incautious passenger walked over them, and the victim, thus suddenly precipitated into some den of horror, was plundered, and his body foully disposed of; of persons, carrying bundles in the streets, being tripped up by a rope held by two confederates across the way, and their property taken from them; or of some such daring act as the following:

"Wednesday morning, two men armed with cutlasses went into a shop in Whitechapel, and, meeting with the mistress, demanded her money. On her endeavouring to call for assistance, they cut her across the arms, &c., and then robbed her of forty pounds in cash."—*From the Westminster Journal of January 30, 1773.*

Here is another desperate robbery, related in the *British Gazette of May 8, 1796*:

"Tuesday night, between ten and eleven o'clock, some villains knocked at the door of Mr. Keys, baker, of Golden-lane, and, immediately on its being opened by Mr. Keys, one of them seized him, and held a pistol to his head, while the other two searched the drawers, &c. They stayed in the house near an hour, and, after robbing Mr. Keys of his watch and a considerable sum of money, and several other articles of value, they departed, very politely wishing him a good night."

Two more instances will suffice to show the frequency and daring nature of these robberies:

“On Monday night, the house of Mr. Russell, of Greenwich, was broken open and entered by twelve men, who bound every one in the house with cords, and carried off furniture, wearing apparel, and plate to a considerable amount. They are supposed to have been watermen, as they were seen to go into a boat with the property, and put off for the Essex shore.”—*British Gazette of February 12, 1792.*

“On Sunday night last, at ten o'clock, a most daring robbery was committed at a small public-house on the Woolwich road, known by the sign of the Antigallican, adjoining Hanging Wood, by some desperate villains, who, entering the house, bound the master and mistress and all the servants, with two men who were drinking there. They then began to ransack the house of linen and cash to the amount of sixty pounds, afterwards sat down and drank and smoked their pipes till three o'clock in the morning, and then took their leave. It is to be observed that two brewer's servants on duty, passing by at eleven o'clock, saw a light in the house, and knocked at the door, whom the desperadoes let in, and seized and confined them also. They were seen going afterwards to the water-side, where a boat was ready to receive them, in which they effected their escape.”—*British Gazette of the same day.*

All these depredators, we should opine, were allied to the class of Thames pirates.

Of another gang it is recorded, that “their next robbery was at the house of a grocer in Thames-street. The watchman passing by as they were packing up their booty, Bellamy seized him, and obliged him to put out his candle to prevent any alarm being given. Having kept him till they were ready to go off with their plunder, they took him to the side of the Thames, and threatened

to throw him in if he would not throw in his lantern and staff. It need not be said that the poor man was obliged to comply with their injunctions." This statement bears ample testimony to the miserable inefficiency of the poor old guardians of the night; and we cannot help thanking kind fate that we were born in the days of gas, and that, with all their faults, the police (if we can be allowed to speak metaphorically for once) watch over our pillow.



## CHAPTER XX.

## CRIME AND PETTY OFFENCES—(CONTINUED).

OF Burnworth's gang we read: "The circumstance of Marjoram having turned evidence being the public topic of conversation, John Barton provided a loaded pistol, and placing himself near Goldsmiths' Hall, took an opportunity, when the officers were conducting Marjoram before the lord mayor, to fire at him; but Marjoram, observing him advancing, stooped down, so that the ball grazed his back only. The suddenness of this action, and the surprise it occasioned, gave Barton an opportunity of escaping."

Even the pickpockets accompanied their depredations with acts of violence, as we may learn from the *Gazetteer* of July the 17th, 1789:

"To such daring outrages have pickpockets arrived, that, on Tuesday last, as the Society of Sols was going into Pentonville Chapel, Islington, eight or ten surrounded a gentleman who lives near the spot, and was standing to see the Society pass. They jostled him, and turned his breeches-pockets out. He cried aloud, 'Take care of your pockets!' In a few minutes one came up to him, and, without speaking a word, struck him a violent blow on the head, which knocked him down. A person

who was standing near informed the gentleman that his pocket was picked, on which they knocked him down also, and dragged him about the road by his hair, and then dispersed, no person choosing to secure them, though it was noonday, and hundreds present."

These were strange scenes for the streets of such a metropolis to witness; or, in admirable keeping with the character of the times, a struggle between a band of smugglers and a troop of soldiers would take place on Blackfriars-bridge, such as there was in 1778. These smugglers took advantage of the unprotected state of the City streets, for some time even making a depôt for their contraband stores at the Fleet Prison! They had store-houses and places of safe deposit for their wares in all parts of London; and from the *Westminster Journal* of October the 29th, 1774, we find they used to carry their articles pretty openly:

"Wednesday morning early, three custom-house officers stopped a post-chaise and four on the Deptford-road, in which were Indian goods to the amount of some hundred pounds, which they seized. It is said they were designed for a capital smuggler at the west-end of the town, and that the officers got the information by making one of his servants drunk."

In another paper we find that, in the article of tea alone, the revenue was estimated, in 1784, to be defrauded to the extent of one million sterling annually!

At another time we read of a band of smugglers, armed to the teeth, escorting a cavalcade of "run" goods, as they were termed, in the very face of the officers, from Poole to London. The caravan consisted of some eight or ten waggons and carts, drawn by six, four, and two horses respectively, and the officers did not dare to meddle

with its progress until it arrived in the streets of London, when the result of a pitched battle was, that the constables and revenue officers were worsted, and the smugglers carried their merchandise to its destination in safety, or, as the newspaper account has it, "re-formed the procession, and carried their arms, which consisted of blunderbusses, pistols, cutlasses," &c.

Fierce, indeed, and for life or death, were these encounters; for, from the Continent being closed to us by successive wars, and foreign goods consequently commanding a high price in the market which could be legitimately supplied with them, the gains of these smugglers were enormous; although not greater than their risks, for, by the Smuggling Act of 1747, all magistrates and justices of the peace were enjoined to use every effort to apprehend them, on pain of being convicted of "an high misdemeanour;" to "repel force by force," and adopt "any violence and hostilities which may be necessary to suppress and subdue them, or bring them to justice;" and to "raise the *posse comitatus*, or use the whole power of the county capable of bearing arms, and any military force in those parts, to assist them." For, "the assembling and going armed, to the number of three, to assist in any sort of smuggling, or receiving or protecting run goods, or rescuing persons guilty, and the resisting officers of the customs or excise by the like number of armed men, are made felony, without benefit of the clergy."

But there was another kind of smuggling occasionally going on in the streets of London, and the hackney-coach or chair was frequently employed in carrying newly-dead and disinterred bodies from the churchyards to the surgeons! Assisted, like all the other crimes, by the inefficiency of the police force and the dreariness of the streets,



it was also much encouraged by the high price which, in a scarcity of "subjects," the anatomists would pay for a body for the purpose of dissection. Large parties of "body-snatchers," or "resurrectionists"—often in league with the parish sextons or gravediggers—were constantly prowling about, and watching around the churchyards; and, the night after a funeral, they would disinter the body, toss it into a sack, or a chair, and carry it off to the dissecting-room.

In the winter of 1778-9, it is estimated that this trade was carried on in London to the extent of something like fifty or a hundred bodies weekly. Some ludicrous stories have been told of the doings of the resurrection-men. One runs thus: A young swain, who was returning from courting, chanced to observe, as his way lay past a churchyard, a cart standing at the gate, in which a figure, dressed in a great-coat and slouched hat, was sitting, erect and stiff. Lubin, having a glimmering of the truth dawning upon his mind, jumped into the cart, and, finding his suspicions correct, stripped the corpse of its great-coat and hat, and putting them on himself, uncereimoniously placed it by the roadside, and took its seat in the same grave posture in which it had been propped up. On the return of the body-snatchers from filling up the grave which they had robbed, one jumped up to each side of the fancied corpse, and the horse was started off at a gallop, each fellow taking hold of one of the arms to steady and support their prize. After a short time the warmth of the body startled one of the rascals, who exclaimed to his companion, "Why, Jack, the body's warm!" "Ay," cries Lubin, turning fiercely upon them, "and I'll warm you in a minute, by G——!" The fellows, with a wild shriek, sprang out of the cart, and, as

they rolled over in the mud, Lubin drove on, with a horse and cart, great-coat, and hat, to begin his married life with, for it need not be said that they were never claimed.

Another band of resurrectionists alighted upon a man who was lying, drunk and insensible, in the streets, and "bagging" him, carried him off to an anatomist, to whom they sold him. The unfortunate bacchanalian was duly stowed away in the dark cellar for dissection in the morning, but, on coming to his senses during the night, shouted for his liberty. On the return of the snatchers with another body, the surgeon told them of the deception, and, much embarrassed by the awkwardness of the case, demanded what he was to do with his noisy subject? "What are you to do?" they repeated, coolly; "why, *keep him till you want him.*"

There was another class of desperadoes, happily now extinct, who were called "invisible thieves," from the manner in which they conducted their operations. It was about the year 1730 that letters were freely circulated to wealthy persons, threatening them that, unless they deposited a certain sum of money in a particular place, they would be assassinated, or their houses set on fire. These threats were frequently carried into execution, till, from fear of the consequences, their extortionate requests were pretty generally complied with. One rich merchant in Bristol, who resisted their demands, had his house reduced to ashes by these miscreants; and presuming upon the impunity they enjoyed, they had at last threatened one of the judges, and this seems to have led to the adoption of vigorous measures for the protection of the public against their alarming proceedings:

"William Lee, Esquire, one of the judges of the King's Bench, having received a letter signed 'Honesty,

Trusty, Fidelity,' requiring him to lend them fifty pounds, and to lay it in a certain place therein mentioned, and threatening to murder him in case of refusal, his majesty has promised his most gracious pardon, and two hundred pounds reward, to any one who shall discover his accomplice or accomplices in writing or sending the said letter."—*London Magazine, December, 1735.*

Soon afterwards, the panic occasioned by the increasing audacity of these invisible bands became so great that the king issued a special proclamation, forbidding persons from acceding to their demands, and setting a reward of three hundred pounds upon the heads of the incendiary letter-senders—a step which, in a short time, put a stop to their infamous practices.

Street tumults, it may be imagined, were frequent, and sometimes rose to an extent that required the use of military force to repress; the mob were fond of displaying their power, and that power was, for a time, almost tacitly acknowledged to be absolute. In the forty-ninth number of the *Covent Garden Journal*, the assumed rights and privileges of the mob are recited: such as those of insulting all passengers on the river Thames; obstructing the footpaths with chairs and wheelbarrows, and the streets with cars, drays, and waggons; and the disputing possession of the country roads, so that "a gentleman may go a voyage at sea with little more hazard than he can travel ten miles from the metropolis." Encouraged by success, they at length claimed the exclusive right to the parks on Sunday evenings; and ladies, without regard to their rank or beauty, were summarily expelled from "the people's ground" by the popular means of "mobbing."

In 1716, the mob was made the instrument of the Jacobite faction, and in all their outbreaks and tumults,



from whatever cause arising, would contrive to exhibit a dislike to the Hanoverian succession—not that they cared two straws about the matter, or knew any more; but a mob must have some grievance to keep it together, and the Jacobites had flung them this bone of contention to pick when their other food for complaint was exhausted. Their fury against the newly-established order of things exhibited itself in such excesses, that, at last, the Whig clubs banded themselves into parties to suppress them. Fierce fights ensued: the Whig clubs, meeting at staunch Hanoverian taverns, would sally forth, on being apprised that there was a mob in the neighbourhood, and, with but one or two exceptions, the mob got the worst of it. The Loyal Society, at the Roebuck, in Cheapside, was one of the most conspicuous in this guerilla warfare. The taverns where the “Loyalists” assembled went by the name of Mug-houses, and hence the disturbances (which lasted for two or three years) are known to history as the “Mug-house riots.”

But there were feuds even among this commonwealth; for, in May and June, 1717, open war was declared between the butchers and the footmen of the city of Westminster, in which the former made an alliance with all their brethren of the London markets, and the latter with the Bridewell boys. The weavers were also very turbulent about this time, and attacked all ladies whom they met in the streets wearing foreign silks and satins. At a later period, the London mobs delighted in storming the hearses, and attacking the mourners at funerals; in tearing up the pavements before, and breaking the windows, and even pulling down the houses of persons who offended them. At different times the Irish, the Portuguese, the Catholics, the Jews, and the Quakers, were the objects of

King Mob's aversion, and scenes as closely bordering upon anarchy as many that have received the name were constantly occurring.

A few specimens:

"*April 13th.*—A quarrel happened in Stepney-fields between some English and Portuguese sailors, in which three of the former were killed."—*Annual Register for 1760.*

"*April 15th.*—This evening, as an English sailor was walking in Mill-yard, Whitechapel, he was stabbed in the back by a Portuguese sailor, and instantly died. The murderer was pursued to Rag Fair, where the mob nailed him by his ear to the wall. Some time after he broke from thence, with the loss of a part of it, and ran; but the mob were so incensed that they followed, cut and wounded him with knives, till, at last, he either fell or threw himself into a puddle of water, where he died."—*From the same.*

A Jew seizes the opportunity of a consternation occasioned by an accident at the postern-gate of the Tower, to pick a sailor's pocket, and the sailors, in a body, retaliate upon the whole community:

"*June 4th.*—During the consternation occasioned by the accident, a sailor had his pocket picked by a Jew, who, after undergoing the usual discipline of ducking, hopped out of the water, pretending to have his leg broke, and was carried off by some of his brethren. But the sailors, discovering the trick, and considering it as a cheat, pursued him to Duke's-place, when at first they were beaten off by the inhabitants; but, presently returning with a fresh reinforcement, they attacked the place, entered three houses, threw everything out of the windows, broke the glasses, tore the beds, and ripped up the

wainscot, leaving the houses in the most ruinous condition. With the furniture, three children sick of the small-pox were thrown out of the window.”—*Annual Register for 1763*.

An execution or a parliamentary election was, of course, a gala for his Majesty King Mob. At an execution in 1721, at Tyburn, some of the criminals had their eyes almost beaten out by the missiles that were flung at them; but, generally, the sympathies of the populace seem to have been with the culprit:

“As soon as the execution of several criminals, condemned at last sessions of the Old Bailey, was over at Tyburn, the body of Cornelius Sanders, executed for stealing about fifty pounds out of the house of Mrs. White, in Lamb-street, Spitalfields, was carried and laid before her door, where, great numbers of people assembling, they at last grew so outrageous that a guard of soldiers was sent for to stop their proceedings; notwithstanding which, they forced open the door, pitched out all the salmon-tubs, most of the household furniture, piled them on a heap, and set fire to them, and, to prevent the guards from extinguishing the flames, pelted them off with stones, and would not disperse till the whole was consumed.”—*Annual Register for 1763*.

“*May*.—The criminal condemned for returning from transportation at the sessions, and afterwards executed, addressed himself to the populace at Tyburn, and told them he could wish they would carry his body and lay it at the door of Mr. Parker, a butcher in the Minories, who, it seems, was the principal evidence against him; which being accordingly done, the mob behaved so riotous before the man’s house that it was no easy matter to disperse them.”—*Annual Register for 1764*.



"*August 19th.*—A terrible storm made such an impression on the ignorant populace assembled to see a criminal executed on Kennington-common, that the sheriff was obliged to apply to the secretaries of state for a military force to prevent a rescue, and it was near eight in the evening before he suffered."—*Annual Register for 1763.*

But an election was an excellent occasion for the display of their propensities. Here is a series of scenes enacted at, and arising out of, the election of Lord Warkworth for Westminster, on March the 15th, 1763:

"The guard placed over a large quantity of beer provided for the entertainment of the populace, getting drunk, stove the casks, and, in the struggle to get at them, a quarrel broke out between a party of sailors and some Irish chairmen, when the former, getting the better, drove the others from the field, and destroyed all the chairs they could meet with, except one, having on it these words: 'This belongs to English chairmen.' The disturbances were renewed on the 17th, when a party of guards was obliged to interfere. 20th.—Search being made by the peace officers at the houses of ill-fame about Tower-hill, several women of the town and some sailors were taken, and, next morning, carried before the justices for examination; but, intelligence being given to their shipmates, a large body of them assembled and threatened the justices if they should proceed to commitment. The justices applied for a guard to the commanding officer at the Tower, and, a few musqueteers being sent, they were found insufficient to intimidate the sailors, whose numbers increasing, a second and third reinforcement were demanded, and an engagement would certainly have ensued but for the address of a sea officer, who, by fair words, called off two-thirds of the sailors, just as the word was

given to the soldiers to fire upon them. The justices proceeded to business, and made out the mittimus of eight of the street-walkers; but in the afternoon of the same day, as they were going to Bridewell, under a guard of a sergeant and twelve men, they were rescued in Chiswell-street by a fresh party of sailors, who carried them off in triumph, after one man had been shot in the groin."—*Annual Register for 1763.*

Here is another specimen of the tumultuous disposition of the chairmen, which could only be checked by calling out the military:

"On Wednesday night last, about twelve, there was such a great riot in Windmill-street, near the Haymarket, that near a hundred gentlemen and others were all engaged at one time, some with swords, and others with sticks and canes, wherein abundance were dangerously wounded. The watchmen that came to put an end to the affray were knocked down and barbarously used. At last the patrol of horse guards came, and, finding them obdurate, rode through them, cutting all the way with their swords; yet we hear of none that were killed upon the spot, though many, it is thought, cannot recover of their wounds. When they saw their own time they gave over, and, upon summing up the matter, the quarrel began with two chairmen only."—*Original Weekly Journal, May 21, 1720.*

Much mischief arose out of the corrupt manner in which justice was administered; the magistrates, even in the metropolis, being often indolent, ignorant, or mercenary men, while those in the country were as often distinguished by their cruelty, severity, and actual brutality—all equally injurious to the cause of peace and order. The London magistrates were at one time notorious for receiving bribes from such brawlers as porters, chairmen, and the like, and

openly compounding with the keepers of disorderly houses. Henry Fielding, in the "Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon," declares that during his career as a Middlesex magistrate, he reduced the emoluments of his office from 500*l.* down to 300*l.* a year, by adopting a purer course of conduct, although Smollett ungenerously insinuates that he was one of the class known as "Trading Westminster Justices." In his comedy of "Rape upon Rape," Fielding draws a portrait of one of these trading justices and his minions, the constables, in the characters of Justice Squeezum and Staff. The ignorant and tyrannical country justice of the time is well drawn in his character of Squire Western; and even Allworthy is in some haste to commit wenches to Bridewell for indiscreet connexions. The Justice Goble of Smollett's "Sir Launcelot Greaves" was, no doubt, no exaggerated caricature, but the type of a large class.

Neither, we may here incidentally remark, were juries always incorruptible, for in the *London Evening Post* of April the 2nd, 1774, it is boldly asserted that, in all crown cases, Middlesex special juries "are allowed an elegant dinner at Appleby's, and five guineas a man, if a verdict be given for the crown or government, otherwise they pay their own expenses." But what could magistrates or juries make of laws which hid themselves in the most obscure phraseology,—of statutes which were purposely written in such a jargon as no one understood, and which, even more than in our own day, it required hosts of lawyers and barristers to interpret for you? In one of his *Champions*, Fielding, who was then becoming initiated in the confused jumble of the legal language, gives the following as the style of a barrister's opinion, or simple answer to the simple question, whether an action would



lie for an author who had it said of him that he had no wit?

“*Moy semble quod si ascun dit de J. S. eteant un Poete, quod est dull Action bien bolt gyser et le Resolution de sa case 1 R. A. 55 s. 16. Bien agree que ces ubi action fuit port per un Apprentice del Ley et Pit declare quod Dett aboit dit de luy quod est Duncce and will get nothing by the Law. Et le opinion del Court fuit quod Action bien gist car Home Poet este heabie et nemy tam pregnant come ascun auters sont et encore un bon Lawyer. Mes quia il aboit dit que il ne boet get ascun chose per le Ley Action gist. Sic icy car si poet soit Heabie ou Dull non boet gist ascun chose en le world.*”

So much for the Norman-Latin-English of the law!

In a previous chapter, in which we spoke of public sports and amusements, we have shown what was to be apprehended from the mob by contumacious householders who refused to “light up” at the time of an illumination. We are not told whether the following attacks arose out of any such causes, but they are pretty fair samples of the mob violence of the latter part of the century:

“A few days since, three men were, by William Addington, Esq., committed to Newgate on a charge against them on oath, for riotously and tumultuously assembling together to the disturbance of the public peace, and for demolishing and pulling down four dwelling-houses, situate in St. Anne’s-lane, Westminster, belonging to the governors of the Grey-coat School.”—*Old British Spy*, January 4, 1783.

“Convicted at the Old Bailey, on Monday, Thomas

Biggett, for having feloniously and riotously assembled, with divers other persons, at the dwelling-house of Luke Case, in Golden-lane, and begun to demolish and pull down the said dwelling-house."—*British Gazette, September 28, 1794.*

The outrages perpetrated by the mob during the Sacheverel, or "High Church" riots, and demolition of meeting-houses, in 1710, and in the memorable "Riots of '80"—the burning of Newgate and destruction of the gaols, the pulling down of Roman Catholic places of worship, and the other enormities of the mad mob that followed mad Lord George Gordon, and who frightened poor Kennet, the Lord Mayor of London at the time, into a state of perfect helplessness, are fully recorded in history; but the savage proceedings of a club, which took its name from a savage nation as illustrative of its practices, have not been so elaborately reported. We allude to the Society of Mohocks, established in London for the benevolent purpose of terrifying and ill-using the unprotected passengers in the streets at night—one of the most extraordinary combinations that ever set law at defiance, startled society in its securest resting-places, and disgraced the character of civilised and reasoning beings, to which its members pretended. Senseless in its purpose, and destitute of feeling, fear, or shame, in the execution of that purpose, this club of fiends kept the metropolis in a state of constant alarm by its atrocities, and astonishment at its audacity, and almost leaves us in doubt whether it can belong to history, or is not the offspring of some wild romance. However, to the shame of human nature, it was no unsubstantial terror that Gay alludes to in the following lines:

Who has not trembled at the Mohocks' name?  
Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds  
Safe from their blows, or new-invented wounds?

Worthy Sir Roger de Coverley, on going to the play-house, was so apprehensive of an attack from the Mohocks, that we find him guarded by Captain Sentry and a whole posse of his own servants, the former armed with the very sword with which he fought at the battle of Steinkirk, and the latter with stout oaken flails and staves.

The account which the "Spectator" gives of their rules and practices is certainly somewhat appalling, and justifies all these preparations for defence on the part of his friend Sir Roger, before he sallied out by night: "An outrageous ambition of doing all possible hurt to their fellow-creatures is the great cement of their assembly, and the only qualification required in the members. In order to exert this principle in its full strength and perfection, they take care to drink themselves to a pitch that is beyond the possibility of attending to any motions of reason or humanity, then make a general sally, and attack all that are so unfortunate as to walk the streets through which they patrol. Some are knocked down, others stabbed, others cut and carbonadoed."

We might be inclined to speak lightly of this society of rabid "young men about town," did not the publications of the time treat the matter so gravely as to force upon us a conviction of the demon-like nature of their midnight orgies. The Mohocks, taking their name from a nation of Red Indians, almost rivalled them in the barbarities they practised. The president of the club was named "Emperor of the Mohocks," and the club itself divided into several classes, each of which took its particular de-



partment. One party would sally forth for the purpose of "Tipping the Lion," or violently flattening the noses of passengers who fell in their way, and gouging out their eyes; another tribe would give pursuit to some trembling passer-by with frantic shouts of "A sweat! a sweat!" and on overtaking him, they would form round their prey, and, with the dance of a set of imps, prick him with their swords till they had exhausted him. Then there were the "Tumblers," who devoted themselves especially to the diversion of turning females upon their heads; and the "Dancing Masters," who took their name from their skill in keeping their victim in constant motion by running their swords into his legs. One tribe delighted in thrusting females into barrels, and then setting them rolling down hill; another derived its chief sport from beating and ill-using the watchmen. In fact, they were the scourge and terror of the city, and that they might not be inclined to stop at any atrocity, they made a point of drinking till they were in a state of perfect frenzy, before they sallied forth.

They fairly frightened Swift out of his evening walks, and appear to have been a perfect nightmare in his thoughts. He sends all sorts of stories about them to Stella, such as—

"*March 8th, 1711-12.*—Did I tell you of a race of rakes called the Mohocks? that play the devil about this town every night, slit people's noses, and bid them," &c.

"*9th.*—Young Davenant was telling us at court how he was set upon by the Mohocks, and how they ran his chair through with a sword. It is not safe being in the streets at night for them. The Bishop of Salisbury's son is said to be of the gang. They are all Whigs, and a

great lady sent to me to speak to her father and to Lord Treasurer to have a care of them, and to be careful likewise of myself, for she heard they had malicious intentions against the ministers and their friends. I know not whether there may be anything in this, though others are of the same opinion."

"12th.—I walked in the park this evening, and came home early to avoid the Mohocks. My man tells me, that one of the lodgers heard in a coffee-house, publicly, that one design of the Mohocks was upon me, if they could catch me; and, though I believe nothing of it, I forbear walking late, and they have put me to the charge of some shillings already. I came home in a chair for fear of the Mohocks from Lord Treasurer's, and have given him warning of it too."

"15th.—I came home afoot, but had my man with me. Lord Treasurer advised me not to go in a chair, because the Mohocks insult chairs more than they do those on foot. They think there is some mischievous design in these villains. Several of them, Lord Treasurer told me, are actually taken up. I heard at dinner that one of them was killed last night. We shall know more in a little time. I do not like them as to men."

"16th.—Lord Winchelsea told me to-day at court that two of the Mohocks caught a maid of old Lady Winchelsea's at the door of their house in the park, with a candle, and had just lighted out somebody. They cut all her face, and beat her without any provocation. I hear my friend Lewis has got a Mohock in one of the messengers' hands."

"18th.—There is a proclamation out against the Mohocks; one of those that are taken is a baronet. I met Prior, who made me go home with him, where I stayed

till twelve, and could not get a coach, and was alone; and was afraid enough of the Mohocks. I will do so no more, though I got home safe."

"19th.—We stayed till past one (at Lord Masham's), but I had my man to come with me."

"26th.—Our Mohocks go on still, and cut people's faces every night, but they shan't cut mine. I like it better as it is. The dogs will cost me at least a crown a week in chairs," &c., &c.

Here then is the town talk of three weeks about the Mohocks, but we never heard Swift's statement, that they were attached to any political party, confirmed. We attribute it to his prejudices against the Whigs, and his desire, which often peeps out in his Journal, of impressing upon Stella that he was a mark of note among his party, which the Whigs always had their eyes upon.

In 1720, the young "bucks" and rakes had changed their sport, and, in the same depraved taste, had conceived a new order of clubs, called "The Hellfires." These infamous assemblages were held at various taverns, and frequented by the most dissipated of the higher classes, who, first maddening themselves with ardent spirits, took pleasure in uttering every kind of horrible blasphemy. The Trinity was a favourite subject for their profane jests; and in obscene derision they would shock the feelings of some quiet company by entering a tavern and calling for a "Holy Ghost Pie," or proposing a toast that made the blood run cold. Women were often among their number, and at their meetings assumed the character of the "Mother of Christ," and gave utterance to all kinds of horrible ribaldry and lewd jests. The horror which the reports of these revels caused in the public mind induced the government to issue a proclamation, enjoining their



immediate and entire suppression, which appeared on the 28th of April, 1721.

But the "choice spirits" of the age were not to be restrained by law or public opinion, for, from Dr. Johnson's "London," we may infer that the old Mohock spirit was among them as late as 1735:

Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,  
And sign your will before you sup from home,  
Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,  
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man—  
Some frolic drunkard reeling from a feast,  
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.  
Yet even these heroes, mischievously gay,  
Lords of the street, and terrors of the way,  
Flush'd as they are with folly, youth, and wine,  
Their prudent insults to the poor confine;  
Afar they mark the flambeaux' bright approach,  
And shun the shining train and gilded coach.

Ho! ho! even in your lawlessness, Messieurs Mohocks, you feared the rich and trampled on the poor! If there could have been a redeeming point in your conduct, it would have been that you paid no respect to persons, but treated all alike!

The "Nickers" were another class of "gentlemen" street offenders. *Their* sport was more harmless, and smacks somewhat of more modern tastes, for Gay tells us:

His scattered pence the flying Nicker flings,  
And with the copper-shower the casement rings.

If these worthies had broken the windows with golden guineas instead of copper pence, it would have been more generous. Many an honest Cit would then rather have heard the Nicker at his window than the knocker at his door.

In the chapter on "Travelling," we have said that we hear of few river pirates, but we have just alighted upon

a paragraph in the *Craftsman* of May the 12th, 1787, which proves that they not only existed, but were rather formidable characters, although their designs seem mostly to have been against the property lying on, rather than the persons travelling by, the "silent highway" of the Thames:

"Thursday night, between the hours of twelve and one o'clock, the *Calais Packet*, Captain Thomas Meriton, lying in the Thames, at Lady Parsons' Stairs, was boarded by eight men, armed with pistols and cutlasses, who, with horrid imprecations, went between decks to the mate, demanded his money, asked for the captain (who happened not to be on board), robbed the vessel of goods to the amount of one hundred pounds, the custom-house officers stationed on board the same ship of all their moneys, and then got safely off with all their booty. Information being immediately given at the public office, East Smithfield, Messrs. Dawson, Mayne, and Whiteway went in pursuit, and apprehended, after a desperate resistance, eight notorious fresh-water pirates, and brought them before Robert Smith, Esquire, at the said office, who committed them to New Prison for further examination on Thursday next."

And here are three other paragraphs, the last of them proving the determined character of these robbers:

"Wednesday night, as three fresh-water pirates were attempting to board a merchant ship near Shadwell Dock, the mate, who had hid himself behind the mainmast, being armed with a large blunderbuss, let fly at them, killed one on the spot, and the other two are so much wounded that it is thought they cannot live. They were conveyed to the London Hospital."—*Craftsman*, February 17, 1787.

"Friday night, some fresh-water pirates boarded a merchant ship in the river, near Church Stairs, from

which they carried off different articles to the value of near one hundred pounds.”—*British Gazette, February 19, 1792.*

“On Monday evening last, about half-past eleven o’clock, a gang of water pirates, well armed, attempted to rob the Red House at Battersea, kept by Mr. Diston. A neighbour was sitting in the parlour with Mrs. D. and another lady, and, upon hearing a noise in the taproom, he went out to know the cause, when he was seized by five villains masked, who threw him down and stabbed him several times in the breast near the heart. The lady, hearing the scuffle, opened the door, and seeing Mr. Gray wounded, she and Mrs. D. ran up-stairs, and, concealing themselves, they put out the lights. The robbers, having bound the servants, were proceeding to plunder, when they were alarmed by the approach of some neighbours, and took precipitately to their boat.”—*British Gazette of same date.*

We have now gone through the catalogue of crime, from the murderer to the street-rake—from the men who broke heads to the men who broke windows; but we have only seen it at present out of doors—let us visit it at home.

Hogarth has opened up to us the home of crime in his Night Cellar scene of “Industry and Idleness,” and recent improvements in the City disclosed a haunt in which vice and crime had lurked secure for centuries. The print of Hogarth presents all the features of those dens of horror, the night cellars of thieves and murderers. The trap through which a corpse is being flung for concealment is part of the machinery of which so much was brought to light some years ago in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, in the demolition of a house which had served as the



hiding-place of guilt to generations of highwaymen and assassins—with its secret spouts for the conveyance of the stolen property from floor to floor or underground, in case of search; its spring panels in the wainscoting; its subterranean passages; its drawbridges across the Fleet ditch; its false floors and double ceilings.

In these cellars the first lessons of vice were taught, and the last qualms of conscience laughed to scorn, and, in their foul and foetid air, the last feeling of virtue, compunction, or repentance, sickened and was stifled; in these cellars robberies were planned, the plunder shared, gambled away, or secreted, and, if necessary, the mutilated victims hidden where the murderers took refuge. In 1747, one of these cellars in Chick-lane, Smithfield, was so notorious for almost daily murders, that it was called the "Blood Bowl House;" and although, while these fungi swarmed till lately about the root of London, they were seldom used for such bloody purposes as those of the previous century, yet they still, in the character of lodgings for the idle and the poor, were the nursing-places of vice, and the traps in which straying feet were caught.

Such, then, were the cradles of crime in the last century. In the next chapter we shall view its graves, the cross-roads, the stake, and the prison-cell.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## PUNISHMENT OF CRIMINALS.

MR. KNIGHT has called the London of the Eighteenth Century "the City of the Gallows,"—and it is scarcely a misnomer. Enter it at any point, and you would have to pass under a line of gibbets. Pass up the Thames, there were the gibbets along its banks, with the rotting remains of mutineers or persons who had committed murders on the high seas, hanging from them in chains. Land at Execution Dock, and a gallows was being erected for the punishment of some offender of the same class. Enter from the west by Oxford-street, and there was the gallows-tree at Tyburn (the site of which is now, we believe, by the way, occupied by the house No. 45, Connaught-square). Cross any of the heaths, commons, or forests near London, and you would be startled by the creaking of the chains from which some gibbeted highwayman was dropping piece-meal. Nay, the gallows was set up before your own door in every part of the town. Thus, on August the 21st, 1735, Macrae, James, Emerson, and Sellon, and, in 1758, one James White and his brother, were executed on Kennington-common; on March the 7th, 1733, Sarah Malcolm, in Fleet-street; and on September the 14th, 1741, James Hall, at the end of Catherine-street, in the Strand;

in 1760, Patrick M'Carthy was hanged at the foot of Bow-street, in Covent-garden; in 1767, Williamson was hanged in Chiswell-street, Finsbury; Theodore Gardelle, for murdering his landlady, was hanged opposite the end of Panton-street, in the Haymarket; and another murderer in Old-street, St. Luke's. After the riots of '80, the gallows was carried about, and *suspected* parties hanged on the spots where (in many instances on perjured evidence) they were charged with having committed acts of riot; and, after the rebellion of 1745, the heads of the rebel lords were set up on Temple Bar, and a few enterprising men earned a mass of coppers for some weeks by letting out telescopes for the passengers to see the row of gory heads more clearly.

If you came to the junction of four roads in the suburbs, you might be sure there was at least one murderer and suicide buried beneath your feet, with a stake through his body; and turn into Hicks's Hall, and you would see a criminal's body being publicly dissected before a crowd of spectators.

In short, the law-makers contrived, in the hopes of checking crime, to invest its punishment with as many appalling features as possible. In 1752, murders had become so frequent that an act was passed providing for the execution of every criminal one day after the passing of the sentence, and ordering his body to be handed over for dissection at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall, Old Bailey. And those who were entrusted with the administration of the law likewise strove to make it terrible. The very sentence of death was pronounced in as imposing a form as could be conceived—"To be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, and there to be hanged by the neck until you be dead!—dead!!—dead!!!"



But, notwithstanding all this, crime increased. In the mayoralty of Sir Francis Child, in 1732, five hundred and two persons were indicted at the Old Bailey, of whom seventy received sentence of death; and from the "Annual Register" of August the 24th, 1763, we learn, that "since the middle of July, near one hundred and fifty persons have been committed to New Prison and Clerkenwell, for robberies and other capital offences." It must be remembered that the term "capital offences" embraced murder, highway robbery, burglary, forgery, returning from transportation before the expiration of the term to which sentenced, arson, incendiarism, horse and sheep-stealing, falsifying certificates of marriage, Mint, and a host of other offences. By the 9th George I., cap. 22, the wilful destruction of trees planted for ornament; and by the 10th George II., cap. 32, the cutting a hop-bind in a hop garden, were made capital offences!

The following are the statistics of crime for the two years of 1786 and 1787:

"1786.—Convicts executed in London, 44. Results of the Old Bailey sessions:—Capitally convicted, 133; convicted of felonies, 582; acquitted, 430.

"1787.—Convicts executed in London, 101. Results of the Old Bailey sessions:—Capitally convicted, 123; convicted of felonies, 506; acquitted, 430."

The law, stepping forth in all its majesty and terror, clothed in its sable garments, and exhibiting the red towel of the dissecting-room and the white coffin-cloths of the prison grave—the law, holding the halter over guilty heads, and assuming all sorts of hideous guises as it came forward to vindicate outraged society, became at last an image so familiar as to be looked upon with contempt—at all events, with indifference. To strangle a dozen cul-

prits who had offended it, was only one morning's task—nay, it has banished twenty culprits at once into the unknown worlds of eternity! But here are two specimens of rather a lazy morning's work of vengeance:

“*Monday, 4th.*—Twelve malefactors were executed at Tyburn, viz., Denis Neale, John Mason, John Welsh, Robert Keys, Grace Grannett, and Joshua Kidden, for divers highway robberies; John Smith and William Ford, for horse-stealing; Richard Hutton, for returning from transportation; Daniel Wood, for sheep-stealing; Thomas Barnard and William Jenks, for burglaries.”—*Gentleman's Magazine for March, 1754.*

“Yesterday morning, about nine o'clock, the following malefactors were brought out of Newgate, and carried to Tyburn in three carts, where they were executed according to their sentences, viz., Henry Berthand, for feloniously personating one Mark Groves, the proprietor of one hundred pounds three per cent. annuities, and transferring the same as if he was the real owner thereof; William Jones, *alias* Filch, *alias* Parker, for stealing in a warehouse in the Castle and Falcon, in Aldersgate-street, a deal box containing a quantity of haberdashery goods; Peter Verrier, accomplice with Charles Kelly, executed for burglary in the house of Mrs. Pollard, in Great Queen-street; William Odern, for robbing Elizabeth Burrell and Martha Crowten, in Spawfields; Charles Woollett, for robbing Bernard John Cheale, on the highway, of a metal watch; John Graham, for feloniously altering the principal sum of a bank-note of fifteen pounds, so as to make the same appear to be a bank-note of fifty pounds, with intent to defraud Christopher Alderson; Charlotte Goodall and John Edmonds, for stealing in the dwelling-house of Mrs. Fortesque, at Tottenham, where she lived as servant, a great

quantity of plate, linen, &c.; Thomas Cladenboul, for assaulting Robert Chilton on the highway, and robbing him of a gold watch; John Weatherley and John Lafee, for feloniously and treasonably coining and counterfeiting the silver moneys of the realm called shillings and sixpences. They all behaved very penitent.”—*London Evening Post*, October 9, 1782.

This list only contained eleven names—it was quite a slack morning for Tyburn—but it will be observed, that not one of these criminals would have been executed at the present time for such offences as they are charged with: which weighed with us in selecting the above two extracts, and quoting them *in extenso*. We may also note the incidental mention made of another curiosity by the way, in the second of them, of a “fifteen-pounds bank-note.”

These Tyburn processions must have been tolerably frequent in the streets, yet they were viewed with indifference, and the awful cavalcade passed on without eliciting a second thought from the spectators. Strange sights they were, too; two or three carts moving slowly along, containing the criminals, manacled and seated upon their own coffins, while the chaplain was solemnly exhorting them to repentance, surrounded by the sheriffs’ officials, and constables, and even a military guard (for it was not until January, 1765, that Stephen Theodore Jansen, one of the sheriffs, ventured to conduct an execution without the protection of a military force), some of the criminals perhaps wearing the white cockade as an emblem of their innocence.

At St. Sepulchre’s church, it was an old custom for the culprits to be presented by their paramours or friends with bouquets, which they stuck boastfully in their breasts. John Rann, *alias* Sixteen-String Jack, in 1774, was the



last who wore one of these nosegays in his button-hole. The cavalcade was next stopped in Holborn, to allow the convict to have a cup of ale, or, it is fair to presume, of stronger liquors, for instances are constantly occurring of the wretched beings reeling into eternity in a state of wild intoxication. Here is one of many:

“*July 6th.*—Were executed at Tyburn, Elizabeth Banks, for stripping a child; Catharine Conway, for forging a seaman’s ticket; and Margaret Harvey, for robbing her master. They were all drunk, contrary to an express order of the Court of Aldermen against serving them with strong liquors.”

The hurdle was used also for dragging the condemned to the place of execution; but here is another and more primitive march of justice in bringing an offender up to trial:

“*May 13th, Tuesday.*—The notorious Samuel Gregory, who robbed Farmer Lawrence, and had committed several robberies on the highway, was brought by a *habeas corpus* to Newgate from Winchester Gaol, being handcuffed, and chained under a horse’s belly, with seven or eight persons well armed to guard him.”—*London Magazine for May, 1735.*

In like state, Burnworth’s three accomplices were carried from Newgate for trial at Kingston:

“On the approach of the ensuing assizes for the county of Surrey, they were handcuffed, put into a waggon, and, in this manner, a party of dragoons conducted them to Kingston.”

These fellows had been arrested in Holland, and, “on the arrival of the vessel which brought them, they were put into another boat opposite the Tower, which was guarded by three other boats, in each of which was a corporal and several soldiers. In this manner they were

conducted to Westminster, where they were examined by two magistrates, who committed them to Newgate, to which they were escorted by a party of the foot guards."

But to return to the Tyburn scene. The execution was not always a mere tame affair of hanging a dozen or two of penitent sinners; occasionally a little performance would be got up on the very scaffold, such as we find described in the *London Magazine* of July, 1735:

"*Monday, 21st.*—Five of the condemned malefactors were executed at Tyburn, viz., Kiffe and Wilson, for footpadding, in the first cart; MacDonald and Martin, *alias* 'Pup's Nose,' for horse-stealing, in the second cart; and Morperth, for footpadding, in a coach. The two in the second cart behaved very audaciously, calling out to the populace, and laughing aloud several times, though it cannot be now said they were in liquor, the orders of the lord mayor and aldermen having been strictly observed by the keepers."

And again, in the same magazine of September, 1735:

"*Monday, 22nd.*—Ten malefactors were executed at Tyburn, namely, William Lewis, Patrick Gaffney, Edward Togwell, Peter Matthews, Isaac Dennis, and William Phillips, *alias* Clark. They all behaved decently, and with seeming penitence, except Lewis and Hooper, who tossed up their shoes among the populace as soon as they got into the cart, and used several idle expressions."

Sometimes the spectators themselves were the actors, as in the case of Mrs. Brownrigg, when the mob called out to the ordinary to "pray for her damnation, as such a fiend ought not to be saved;" and of Williamson, who was hanged in Moorfields for starving his wife to death, and who "seemed apprehensive of being torn to pieces, and hastened the executioner to perform his office."

But, when their appetite for horrors was disappointed, they were positively furious. Here is an instance, from the *London Magazine* of September, 1735:

A mariner had been condemned at Bristol for the murder of his wife, but on the night preceding the execution he found means to poison himself in his cell, whereupon "the people about Bristol," says the chronicler, "were so incensed at his hardened wickedness, that they dug up his body after it had been buried in a cross-road near that city, dragged his viscera about the highway, picked his eyes out, and broke almost all his bones; after which it was taken and buried in a very deep grave near the gallows."

The tiger had scented the blood, but was cheated out of a taste of it!

The scene of a Tyburn execution is well portrayed in Hogarth's "Industry and Idleness;" and there are some features in it peculiar to the time, such as the guards attending the procession—the chaplain or ordinary seated in the cart—and the coffin placed across it. The criminals were also brought in the same manner from Newgate to Execution Dock, when the peculiar nature of their crime—piracy, or offences on the high seas—made that the place of execution; and both these places were regularly attended by a class which now would turn with horror from such a sight, or would even, to avoid it, go out of their way if it lay upon their road—men in independent circumstances, who, having nothing better to employ their time, were stirring early on execution mornings, and would sooner have lost their night's rest than missed seeing the criminals turned off! And, if there were no more than six or seven of them, would come, grumbling and disappointed, home to breakfast, complaining that "there were hardly any fellows hanged this morning."

The hangings at Execution Dock were conducted in a



peculiar form. The criminal was carried in a hired town-car from Newgate, and came rattling along over the stones, in company with the ordinary, the coffin, and a silver oar as an emblem of authority. The scaffold was placed so that the criminal's feet would reach to about high-water mark, and the body being suspended when the tide was down, was allowed to hang till the river rose and washed the feet of the corpse. It was then cut down and removed to the gibbets along the banks of the Thames, as represented in Hogarth's "Idle 'Prentice sent to Sea," and on them hung in chains.

"*March 14th.*—Williams, the pirate, was hanged at Execution Dock, and afterwards in chains at Bugsby's Hole, near Blackwall."—*Gentleman's Magazine of 1735.*

But there were other horrors besides hangings to be witnessed by the regular frequenters of executions. Women who were found guilty of petit treason, or murdering their husbands, were then sentenced to be burnt alive, although it was understood they were first strangled, thus affording a variation of spectacle now and then, that drew greater crowds together than when even some twenty malefactors were seen hanging upon one scaffold in a row. The following paragraphs will show in what a laconic style these horrible legal brutalities were related. A fearful sign of the times—familiarity had indeed bred indifference!

"At the assizes at Northampton, Mary Fasson was condemned to be burnt for poisoning her husband; and Elizabeth Wilson to be hanged for picking a farmer's pocket of thirty shillings."—"Among the persons capitally convicted at the assizes at Chelmsford, are Herbert Hayns, one of Gregory's gang, who is to be hung in chains; and a woman, for poisoning her husband, to be burnt."—*From the London Magazine for July, 1735.*

And thus are the executions of these wretched women reported in the next number:

"Margaret Onion was burnt at a stake at Chelmsford for poisoning her husband. She was a poor, ignorant creature, and confessed the fact."—"Mrs. Fawson was burnt at Northampton for poisoning her husband. Her behaviour in prison was with the utmost signs of contrition. She would not, to gratify people's curiosity, be unveiled to any. She confessed the justice of her sentence, and died with great composure of mind."—*London Magazine*, August, 1735.

"On Saturday, two prisoners were capitally convicted at the Old Bailey for high treason, namely, Isabella Condon, for coining shillings in Colbath-fields, and John Field, for coining shillings in Nag's Head-yard, Bishops-gate-street. They will receive sentence to be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, the woman to be burnt, and the man to be hanged."—*Harrison's Derby and Nottingham Journal, or Midland Advertiser*, September 23, 1779.

Among the latest cases of this kind are those of Susannah Lott, burnt at Canterbury in 1769, for the murder of her husband; the above case in 1779; a woman at Exeter, July the 29th, 1782, for poisoning her master; Phoebe Harris, in June, 1786, for counterfeiting shillings; and Christian Murphy, at the Debtors' Door, Newgate, March the 18th, 1789, for coining.

Blackstone gives the following reason for this fearful punishment being applied to women in cases of high or petit treason, from which it would seem to have been adopted in deference to the delicacy of public feeling (!):

"For as the decency due to the sex forbids the exposing and publicly mangling their bodies, their sentence (which is to the full as terrible to sensation as the other)

is, to be drawn to the gallows, and there to be burnt alive." But, he adds, "The humanity of the English nation has authorised, by a tacit consent, an almost general mitigation of such part of these judgments as savours of torture and cruelty, a sledge or hurdle being usually allowed to such traitors as are condemned to be drawn, and there being very few instances (and those accidental or by negligence) of any persons being embowelled or burnt till previously deprived of sensation by strangling."

One of these "accidents" occurred at the execution of Katharine Hayes, at Tyburn, for the murder of her husband, November the 3rd, 1726. The fire scorching the hands of the executioner, he slackened the rope before he had strangled her, and, although fresh fagots were piled around her, it was some time before she died, in fearful agonies.

This barbarous law was not repealed until the 30th George III., cap. 48 (1790).

On glancing casually through a number of the *London Magazine* (in which, of course, the *whole* of the executions and capital convictions may not have been reported), we may sum up three weeks' work thus:

*March 5th, 1735.*—A man and woman capitally convicted at Aylesbury; and a man at Hertford, for returning from transportation.

*March 6th.*—A man condemned for horse-stealing at Northampton.

*March 8th.*—Two men sentenced to death at Oxford, and six at Chelmsford.

*March 10th.*—Thirteen persons executed at Tyburn, of whom three were women. (*Note.*—Another man "was to have been executed with them, but died in Newgate about three the same morning, and was ordered to be hanged in chains with the others.")



*March 12th.*—Two men condemned at Gloucester.

*March 14th.*—Eight men condemned at Rochester. Same day, “Thomas Williams, the pirate, was executed at Execution Dock, and afterwards hung in chains near Blackwall.”

*March 15th.*—One man and one woman condemned at York; and one man at Hereford, “for destroying a turn-pike.”

*March 18th.*—One man and one woman capitally convicted at East Grinstead.

*March 20th.*—Four men and one woman condemned at Bury St. Edmunds; and one woman at Nottingham.

*March 26th.*—Eight men sentenced to death at Kingston, one of whom was convicted of “cutting a man’s tongue out, and robbing him of six shillings.”

This shows a total of forty-one persons sentenced to death at the assizes in the country, and fifteen hanged in London—in all, fifty-six in three weeks!

Now let us see what offences so many persons were capitally convicted of at every assize.

We will take another number of the same magazine at random. Of eleven so convicted at the Old Bailey on December the 15th, 1735, one is for housebreaking, one for horse-stealing, one “for stealing two pieces of sarcenet out of a shop” (now called by the mild term of “shoplifting”), one for a street robbery, one “for robbing Mr. Bardin of 4s. 6d.,” one “for stealing a guinea,” and five for highway robbery; not one of which offences would now subject the perpetrator to the punishment of death.

The hangman had in those days a much greater latitude allowed him: forgery, burglary, horse-stealing, shoplifting, all were “capital” offences; nay, the executions themselves were pronounced “capital” sights by the taste of the age, and even the refined George Selwyn was disap-

pointed if he were prevented from being present at Tyburn in time for the morning's spectacle.

The unhappy wretches, when the passing of the capital sentence had abandoned them to the tender mercies of the gaolers, were subjected to the indignity of being publicly exhibited in the press-room previously to their execution, thus distracting their attention from the thoughts which the ordinary was endeavouring to instil into their minds. The *Public Ledger* of the morning after the execution of the celebrated Doctor Dodd, for forgery, states that "the turnkeys levied a fee of a shilling a head for admittance into the press-room, and the exhibition lasting two hours, they gained a considerable emolument from it." And Horace Walpole tells Sir Horace Mann that on the Sunday after the condemnation of Mac Lean, the highwayman, three thousand persons visited him in his cell.

But they were not even done with when life was gone. Their heads were severed from their bodies, their intestines torn out and burnt, and their bodies quartered, if convicted of high treason; and, although the judgment is still the same in such cases, it has not been of late years carried into execution with all the horrors which attended the death of Mr. De la Motte, convicted of high treason in carrying on a secret correspondence with the enemy, and who, on July the 27th, 1781, suffered at Tyburn the punishment expressed in the judgment of the court "with great fortitude"—"That he should be drawn to the place of execution on a hurdle, and there be hanged by the neck, but not until he was dead; that his bowels should be taken out and burned before his face; that his head should then be severed from his body, and his body divided into four parts, to be at his majesty's disposal." This appalling spectacle was performed where Connaught-

square now stands, without any abatement of its most revolting features, only seventy years ago!

In cases of murder, the bodies were given up for dissection, as we have before stated, originally at Barber-Surgeons' Hall, but afterwards at Hicks's Hall (except when the condemned murderer committed suicide in his cell, when his body was at once buried in a "four-want way," or at the meeting of four roads, with a stake driven through it), and there are some still living whose curiosity drew them to Hicks's Hall to see the public dissection of criminals, and whom the horrid scene, with the additional effect of the skeletons of some noted criminals hanging on the walls, drove out again, sick and faint, as we have heard some of them relate, and with pale and terrified features, "to get a breath of air." Hogarth has depicted one of these dissection scenes in "The Four Stages of Cruelty" ("The Reward of Cruelty") with all its attendant horrors.

In aggravated cases the bodies were hung in chains on public spots—generally as contiguous as convenient to the scene of their crime,—and that they were numerous we may infer from the following passage in the "Annual Register" of 1763:—"All the gibbets in the Edgeware-road, on which many malefactors were hung in chains, were cut down by persons unknown." Verily this road, with its many gibbets, must have formed a picturesque avenue through which to enter London, pregnant with sad forebodings of rapine and midnight murder!

The manner in which the burning of women for petit treason was effected at a period near the close of the century, is fully described in the *Chelmsford Chronicle* of June the 23rd, 1786, and then savoured more of a means of insulting their remains. After detailing the execution of six men for various offences, the report proceeds:

"About a quarter of an hour after the platform had



dropped, the female convicted" (Phœbe Harris, convicted of counterfeiting the coin called shillings) "was led by two officers of justice from Newgate to a stake fixed in the ground about the midway between the scaffold and the pump. The stake was about eleven feet high, and, near the top of it was inserted a curved piece of iron, to which the end of the halter was tied. The prisoner stood on a low stool, which, after the ordinary had prayed with her a short time, being taken away, she was suspended by the neck (her feet being scarcely more than twelve or fourteen inches from the pavement). Soon after the signs of life had ceased, two cart-loads of fagots were placed round her and set on fire; the flames presently burning the halter, the convict fell a few inches, and was then sustained by an iron chain passed over her chest and affixed to the stake. Some scattered remains of the body were perceptible in the fire at half-past ten o'clock. The fire had not completely burnt out at twelve o'clock."

And this was Blackstone's "humanity of the English nation," and "decency due to the sex!" Nor was more regard paid to the *age* of the criminal, for, in May, 1777, a child not fourteen years of age was sentenced to be burnt for having in her possession some farthings white-washed to make them resemble shillings, which she had secreted in her stays at the instigation of her master, who was hanged a few days previously. The sentence would most assuredly have been carried into effect had not the attention of Lord Weymouth been accidentally attracted to it, and at his urgent intercession the child was reprieved.

Still greater barbarity was practised in the application of torture to *untried* prisoners, under the old law of "*Peine forte et dure*," better known as "pressing to death," in the hope of squeezing out, with the agonised

screams of the sufferer, a plea of "Guilty," or "Not Guilty." This dreadful torture or punishment of contumacy, in whichever light it may be considered, is thus described in Chamberlayne's "Present State of Great Britain:"

"The criminal" (refusing to plead to a charge of petit treason, felony, or any capital crime) "to be sent back to the prison from whence he came, and there laid in some dark room upon the bare ground on his back, all naked, his arms and legs drawn with cords fastened to the several quarters of the room; and then shall be laid upon his body iron and stone, so much as he can bear, *or more*; the next day he shall have three morsels of barley bread, *without drink*, and the third day he shall have drink of the water next to the prison-door, *except it be running water*, without bread; and this shall be his diet till he die. Which grievous kind of death some stout fellows have sometimes chosen, and so, not being tried and convicted of their crimes, their estates may not be forfeited to the king, but descend to their children, nor their blood stained."

So writes John Chamberlayne; but, in the edition of his book published in 1741, the editor adds: "But though the law continues, yet we so abhor cruelty" (here the "humanity" of the Eighteenth Century is again vaunted!), "that of late they are suffered to be overcharged with weight laid upon them, that they expire presently."

In other words, refusing to plead to a charge was, in 1741, a capital offence, and the punishment pressing to death! Nor was it abolished until 1771 (12 Geo. III., cap. 20).

Instances of this torture being applied were perhaps rare, but they were not unknown. In 1721, one Nathaniel Hawes bore the pressure of two hundred and fifty

pounds weight in the press-yard of the Old Bailey before he could be brought to plead; and here are three more cases which we have met with: in the first, the threat was sufficient:

“One How was indicted for a street robbery, but refused to plead to the indictment, whereupon the court told him the fatal consequence of such refusal, namely, that he must be miserably pressed to death, and indulged him with time to consider of it till this morning. When again brought up he pleaded guilty, and was condemned to death.”—*Whitehall Evening Post*, August 29, 1728.

“September 5th, 1741.—On Tuesday was sentenced to death, at the Old Bailey, Henry Cook, the shoemaker of Stratford, for robbing Mr. Zachary on the highway. On Cook’s refusing to plead, there was a new press made and fixed in the proper place in the press-yard, there having been no person pressed since the famous Spiggott, the highwayman, about twenty years ago. Burnworth, *alias* Frazier, was pressed at Kingston, in Surrey, about sixteen years ago.”—*Universal Spectator*, No. 674.

The next was more obdurate:

“At the assizes at Lewes, in Sussex, a man who pretended to be dumb and lame was indicted for a barbarous murder and robbery. He had been taken up on suspicion, several spots of blood and part of the goods being found upon him. When he was brought to the bar he would not speak or plead, though often urged to it, and the sentence to be inflicted on such as stand mute read to him. Four or five persons in the court swore they had heard him speak, and the boy who was his accomplice and apprehended, was there to be a witness against him; yet he continued mute. Whereupon he was carried back to Horsham Gaol, to be pressed to death if he would not plead. They laid on him, first, a hundred-weight, then



added a hundred-weight more, and he still continued obstinate. They then added a hundred-weight more, and then made it three hundred and fifty pounds; yet he would not speak. Then, adding fifty pounds more, he was just dead, having all the agonies of death upon him; then the executioner, who weighs about sixteen or seventeen stone, lay down upon the board which was over him, and, adding to the weight, killed him in an instant."—*London Magazine*, August 21, 1735.

Now is it not quite possible that this poor man was really dumb? Is it not also possible that, not having been tried, he might have been innocent? And yet this cruel scene is thus tamely and in this matter-of-course way related, without a single comment on the barbarity, or one suggestion for the repeal of this savage law!

Another mode of torture for the purpose of extorting a plea from the party indicted was the tying of the thumbs with whipcord, so tightly, that, the cord cutting into the flesh, gave excruciating pain, in which the party arraigned was kept until he pleaded. The last instance in which it was resorted to at the Old Bailey was in 1734, but it was practised at Cambridge Assizes in 1742. In April, 1721, Mary Andrews was thus tortured at the Old Bailey, but was so resolute, that three cords were broken before the plea was extorted from her.

Domestic bondage was another punishment which seems to have been becoming obsolete: we have only met with one case of it, and that was in Scotland, and as early as December the 5th, 1701, when one Alexander Stewart, found guilty of theft, "was gifted by the justice as a perpetual servant to Mr. John Areskine, of Alva."

Negro Slavery was, however, still extant, and it was no crime to buy and sell a black slave:

"A black boy, twelve years of age, fit to wait on a

gentleman, to be disposed of at Denis's Coffee-house in Finch-lane, near the Royal Exchange."—*Tatler*, 1709.

"To be sold, a negro boy, aged eleven years. Enquire of the Virginia Coffee-house in Threadneedle-street, behind the Royal Exchange."—*Daily Journal*, September 28, 1728.

"FOR SALE.—A healthy negro girl, aged about fifteen years; speaks good English, works at her needle, washes well, does household work, and has had the small-pox."—*Public Ledger*, December 31, 1761.

"A neat beautiful black negro girl, just brought from Carolina, age eleven or twelve years, who understands and speaks English. Very fit to wait on a lady. To be disposed of. Application to be made to James Carolan, Carrickmacross; or to Mr. Gavan, in Bridge-street, Dublin."—*Dublin Mercury*, No. 283, August 16, 1768.

In 1772 such sales became illegal.

We have yet another act of vengeance, which is only upon record as being in force—we have no instances of its being carried into effect during the century. This was "civil death," incurred by petty jurors giving corrupt verdicts, or conspiring to convict an innocent party of felony. "They are," says the "Present State of Great Britain" (edition 1741), "to lose the franchise or freedom of the law—that is, to become infamous, of no credit, incapable of being witnesses or of a jury; their houses, lands, and goods are seized into the king's hands; their houses pulled down; their meadows ploughed up, their trees rooted up, and all their lands laid waste, and their bodies imprisoned. But, indeed," adds the editor, "there are no late instances of such punishment."

## CHAPTER XXII.

## PUNISHMENT OF CRIMINALS—(CONTINUED).

OUR grandsires seem to have considered that the greater horror they could excite by the severity of their punishments, the greater check it would be to crime—they never dreamed that they might convert public resentment into commiseration, and indignation at the culprit's crimes into pity for his sufferings. Thus perjury, cheating, libelling, retailing with false weights and measures, forestalling the market, offences in baking and brewing, as adulterations, &c., and forging title deeds, were punishable with the pillory—a sort of cage having a hole in which the neck was locked, and wherein the offenders were publicly exposed in the most frequented thoroughfares; and the wretch who would in this position have excited nothing but contempt or disgust, was made a martyr or a hero by having his ears nailed to the pillory and cut off, being whipped afterwards through the public thoroughfares, having his tongue bored with a red-hot iron, or his nose slit, or being branded with the initial letter of the offence for which he suffered—as “S. L.,” for seditious libeller, on either cheek; “M.,” for manslaughter, or “T.,” for thief, on the left hand; “R.,” for rogue and vagabond, on the shoulder; and “P.,” for perjury, on the forehead; and,



as the papers always described how he bore the punishment "with great fortitude," the coldest said, in pity, "Poor fellow!" whilst the enthusiastic, forgetting his crime in his sufferings, exclaimed in admiration, "Brave man!"

Boring the tongue was, as late as the reign of Queen Anne, a military punishment for an officer guilty of blasphemy, and, according to Grose, was the only corporal punishment an officer could suffer. The branding in the hand was generally inflicted in open court, and immediately after the judge had passed sentence. "In many of the old courts may still be seen the iron staple, large enough for the fingers, and the half-handcuff on a hinge, to hold down the wrist, in which the culprit's hand was placed, and burnt with a small brand-iron on the brawn of the left thumb." (1837.) But the branding on the cheeks or the forehead was performed by the executioner on the pillory.

The pillory was set up on such spots as Charing Cross, Cheapside, St. Paul's Churchyard (facing Ludgate-hill), Cornhill (by the Royal Exchange), the Poultry, and Aldgate. In the Poultry, Daniel De Foe was pilloried for publishing a libel in his "Shortest Way with the Dissenters," which gave occasion for Pope's ungenerous line,

Earless on high stoed unabashed De Foe.

And Curll and Mist, the booksellers, were also similarly punished for libels. And in this exalted position atrocious offenders were assailed by the mob with such gentle missiles as brickbats, stones, mud, dead rats or cats, rotten eggs, bad oranges, &c., as well as the foulest language,

and with such violence that several died under the attack. But very different was the case with those who were supposed to be suffering for conscience' sake; they were loudly cheered, and the officers of justice roughly used; and the "martyrs" converted the pillory into a desk from which to harangue the multitude or distribute tracts and pamphlets, and descended from it as from a car of triumph, working themselves into a frenzy of fanatical enthusiasm that soon produced a goodly crop of written violence, and spread as a contagion among those who witnessed them.

Such was, in these cases, the effect of the pillory. The process of the punishment may be judged from the following extract:

"Thursday, Japhet Cook, *alias* Sir Peter Stringer, who was some time since convicted of forging deeds of conveyance of two thousand acres of land belonging to Mr. Garbett and his wife, lying in the parish of Claxton,\* in the county of Essex, was brought by the keeper of the King's Bench to Charing Cross, where he stood in the pillory from twelve to one, pursuant to his sentence. The time being near expired, he was set on a chair on the pillory, when the hangman, *dressed like a butcher*, came to him, and, with a knife like a gardener's pruning-knife, cut off his ears, and with a pair of scissors slit both his nostrils; all which Cook bore with great patience, but, at the searing with a hot iron of his right nostril, the pain was so violent that he got up from his chair; his left nostril was not seared, so he went from the pillory bleeding."—*Fog's Weekly Journal*, June 12, 1731.

\* This may be a mistake. We cannot trace any parish of this name in Essex. *Clacton* must be meant.

Here is a pillory scene from the "Annual Register" of 1759:

"*June 25th.*—Samuel Scrimshaw and James Ross stood in the pillory for sending a threatening letter to extort a large sum of money from Humphery Morrice, Esquire, and were severely pelted by the populace; but one of the sheriff's officers, having received an affront by being too near the pillory, drew his sword, and fell pell-mell among the thickest of the people, cutting his way indiscriminately through men, women, and children. This diverted the fury of the mob from the criminals to the officer, who, not being able to stand against such numbers, made good his retreat to an adjoining alley, where not above two or three could press upon him at a time, and so escaped."

The sheriff's officer was not worse treated than any passenger might have been at the moment; the mob always had a passion for chasing and tormenting *something*—they cared little for the crimes of the exposed culprits; any indifferent spectator, standing idly by, was equal game, and, as he wiped the mud from his brocaded waistcoat or embroidered coat, or picked up and carefully wiped his soiled laced hat, the roguish 'prentice was always ready with an excuse—" 'Twas a mistake, your honour—a sheer accident;" or perhaps the bespattered dandy got no apology, but a hearty horse-laugh. What says Gay?—

When elevated o'er the gaping crowd,  
Clasp'd in the board, the perjur'd head is bow'd,  
Betimes retreat; here, thick as hailstones, pour  
Turnips and half-hatch'd eggs—a mingled shower  
Among the rabble rain; some random throw  
May, with the trickling yolk, thy cheek o'erflow.

To stem and control the violence of the popular fury,



large guards were required, as in the following case from the *Craftsman* of November the 25th, 1786:

"Yesterday, at twelve o'clock, Mr. A——, the attorney, was brought from Newgate in a hackney-coach, and put into the pillory, which was fixed in the middle of Palace-yard, opposite Westminster Hall gate, and stood for one hour. He was attended by the sheriffs, under-sheriffs, and two city marshals, and about *six hundred* constables, who kept everything quiet. It is supposed that upwards of four thousand people were assembled; but, owing to the sheriffs and other officers keeping a continual look-out, and riding on horseback about Palace-yard the whole time, not any disturbance happened. He was then put into a hackney-coach, and carried back to Newgate."

Another description of pillory, now nearly gone out of use, was the parish stocks, in which drunken brawlers were locked by the heels, with a block to sit upon, till they came to a sober repentance. On the same spot, forming, in fact, part of the stocks, was usually set up in each parish—generally in the market-place of a town, or the most public part of a village—a post, to which rogues and vagabonds were chained by the wrists, and publicly whipped.

But the most general form of whipping was what was called "flogging at the cart's tail," when the criminal was tied to the back of a cart, slowly driven, and flogged through the town by the common executioner, attended by the crowds of idle vagabonds who are always found, hardening themselves for their own turn, at such degrading and demoralising exhibitions. One Stroud, in 1751, was whipped through the streets several times, at monthly intervals, on a conviction for swindling.

Nor was this passion for corporal punishment and whipping (which we regret to see of late years regaining favour) restrained by any considerations of sex, for we find, in the *Westminster Journal* of October the 29th, 1774, that, at the Old Bailey in London, on October the 24th, "Ann Leaver, convicted of grand larceny, was sentenced to be branded in the hand; and (October 25th) Catharine Clark, for petit larceny, to be privately whipped."

In his "Coffee-House Politician," Fielding alludes to this mode of punishing women, making *Staff the Constable* say to *Old Politics'* daughter, "If you are not a woman of virtue, why you will be whipped for accusing a gentleman of robbing you of what you had not to lose" (Act I., Scene 1); and again, in his "*Grub-street Opera*:"

Smaller misses for their kisses  
Are in Bridewell banged.

In his "*Covent Garden Tragedy*" he twice mentions it. Thus *Mother Punchbowl* asks *Bilkum* whether he would

Follow the attractive cart, and see  
The hangman lift the virgal rod?

And, afterwards, *Gallows* says to her, he would give a crown to some poor justice to commit her to Bridewell, "where I will come and see thee flogged myself."

It seems, indeed, incredible that a law which was such a scandal to decency as well as humanity, should have been allowed to disgrace our statute-book so long; but it was not until July the 15th, 1820, that the 1st George IV., cap. 57, better known as "*General Thornton's Act*," put an end to the flogging of women, public or private.

We are indebted to contributors to *Notes and Queries* for the two first of the following laconic entries:

Extract from the Accounts of the Constables of Great Staughton,  
Huntingdonshire :

|       |   |    |    |    |
|-------|---|----|----|----|
| 17 ½  | Spent on Nurse London for searching the woman to see if she was with child before she was whipped—3 of them . . . . . | 0  | 2  | 0  |
|       | P <sup>d</sup> . Tho. Hawkins for whipping two people y <sup>t</sup> had the small-pox . . . . .                      | 0  | 0  | 8  |
| 17 ¼  | P <sup>d</sup> . for watching, victuals, and drink for Ma. Mitchell . . . . .   | 00 | 02 | 06 |
|       | P <sup>d</sup> . for whipping her . . . . .   | 00 | 00 | 04 |
| 171 ¾ | P <sup>d</sup> . for whipping Goody Barry . . . . .   | 00 | 00 | 04 |

Extract from the Corporation Records of Worcester :

|      |                                       |     |     |
|------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| 1759 | For whipping Eliz. Bradbury . . . . . | 2s. | 6d. |
|------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|

(The latter charge, it is suggested, included the hire of the cart, which was usually 1s. 6d., one shilling being at this time the usual fee of the whipsman.)

"On Wednesday the 14th, a woman, an old offender, was conveyed in a cart from Clerkenwell Bridewell to Enfield, and publicly whipped at the cart's tail by the common hangman, for cutting down and destroying wood in Enfield Chase. She is to undergo the same discipline twice more."—*Public Ledger*, 1764.

Here are fine commentaries for Blackstone upon the "decency due to the sex;" and, in the first extract, upon the "humanity of the English nation," inasmuch as they employed a nurse to ascertain "whether the woman was with child, before she was whipped," putting the parish to an expense of two shillings for the sake of perfect decency and humanity!

But if all these barbarities of punishment were publicly known, how much will remain for ever hidden that was inflicted within the depths of the Fleet and Bridewell prisons! The print of Hogarth, in the series of "The Harlot's Progress," shows us the interior of Bridewell at about the middle of the last century, and exposes the system which gave the power of inflicting severe punish-



ments into the hands of ignorant, ill-regulated, and brutal taskmasters. The unhappy prisoners were completely at the mercy of the governors, warders, gaolers, and turnkeys (for even the magistrates would accept bribes from these petty tyrants, to stifle any investigation into their cruelties and extortions), who abused their power most shamefully; and, at their caprice, if their wretched captives were unable or unwilling to perform the work allotted to them, they were punished at the whipping-post with little distinction of age or sex, or suspended by the wrists in a pair of stocks, or clogged with a heavy block round their ankles. The labour exacted from them (beating hemp) was of a nature to fatigue and exhaust the frame and debilitate the constitution, the dust arising from it causing catarrhs, asthmas, and pulmonary diseases, blinding the eyes, and irritating the throat; yet, if they paused for breath, or to relieve their wearied arms, the taskmaster was at their elbow, with his implements of torture ready for them. In some cases the women were whipped only in the presence of one of the governors, to whose discretion it was left as to the number of lashes they were to receive. The punishment was inflicted on their naked backs, the governor giving the signal when the punishment was to cease, with a small hammer. From this circumstance arose the term of reproach to denote that a woman had been whipped as a loose character, "*Oh, pray, Sir Robert, knock!*" But even on the debtors confined in the Fleet prison the same cruelties were practised. What says Thomson?—

The gloomy gaol,  
Unpitied and unheard where misery moans;  
Where sickness pines—where thirst and hunger burn,  
And poor misfortune feels the lash of vice.  
While, in the land of liberty—the land

Whose every street and public meeting glow  
With open freedom, little tyrants raged :  
Snatched the lean morsel from the starving mouth :  
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed :  
E'en robbed them of the last of comforts, sleep ;  
The free-born Briton, to the dungeon chain'd,  
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevailed,  
At pleasure marked him with inglorious stripes,  
And crushed out lives, by secret barbarous ways,  
That for their country would have toiled or bled.

“ Drag forth,” he cries,

Drag forth the legal monsters into light,  
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod,  
And bid the cruel feel the pain they give !

The “legal monsters” *were* dragged forth into light, but, unfortunately, they were never made to feel the pain they gave. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1727 to inquire into the internal discipline of the Fleet; and a long catalogue of cruelty, extortion, and corruption, was revealed. The fees squeezed out of one prisoner alone, a Mr. Castell, an architect, before he was allowed to enter the prison, amounted to forty-five pounds one shilling, and, on his resisting a further extortion, he was arrested within the liberties of the prison, and would have had to go through the same process again, but that he caught the small-pox in the spunging-house, and died. Another victim examined, who fainted at the dread of returning to the Fleet, and ruptured a blood-vessel in his anguish, was a Portuguese, who had been chained in a loathsome dungeon for months. The instruments of torture that were brought forward caused a thrill of horror in the committee-room, and, a searching investigation being excited, it was discovered that it was not only Bambridge, the then warden, who had been guilty of these practices, but his predecessor, Huggins, and perhaps many

before, had almost equalled him in cruelty. The corruption that had been carried on was unbounded. A smuggler named Boyce was enabled to purchase such privileges, that Bambridge had several times broken down the prison wall to enable him to pass in and out. One prisoner was commissioned to purchase wines in France, whither he was permitted to go, with bills accepted by a tipstaff, who, at last refusing to accept more, the prisoner returned and divided his gains with his gaolers. At this prison, as well as at Newgate, the prisoners were allowed to stand at a wicket or grating in the wall which abutted upon the street, and collect alms from the passers-by, with the doleful cry of "Pray remember the poor debtors!" And even this poor-box was pillaged by the keepers of the prison; and yet the perpetrators of these villanies were acquitted on a Crown prosecution, although, it is true, they were never reinstated in their posts.

The state of things at Newgate was little better; the same features of cruelty and corruption pervaded that prison. The poorer class of debtors were indiscriminately placed amongst the worst of felons; debtors of better means were charged a heavy rent annually for separate apartments, and even premiums were demanded varying from twenty to five hundred pounds. Filth, lawlessness, and disorder reigned throughout the gaol; most of the cells were destitute of beds or any description of furniture; a sort of canteen for the sale of vile spirits in short measures, and at exorbitant charges, was kept within the walls; and, to add to the horrors of the place, in one part was a room known as "Jack Ketch's Kitchen," from its being the chamber in which that functionary boiled the quarters of persons executed for high treason, in oil, pitch, and tar, prior to their being publicly exposed.



The abuses in the provincial gaols almost equalled those of the London prisons. The *London Magazine* of July, 1741, lets us into a strange secret connected with the county gaol of Hertford. It appears that the gaoler, one Oxenton, kept "an inn opposite to the prison," and only occasionally went over with his men to see that his prisoners were safe. On the 21st of June, in the year above mentioned, he visited it at four o'clock in the morning, when he found four highwaymen, who were lying under sentence of death, had succeeded in breaking their chains, and speedily overpowered him and his men. He contrived, however, to escape, and sent for Robert Hadsley, Esquire, the high sheriff, who, on the convicts being secured, ordered one of them, Charles Cox, "to be hanged on the arch of the sign-iron belonging to the gaoler's house, and the others to be immediately executed, pursuant to their sentence, in the ordinary way."

We can afford no further space to dwell upon the gross abuses of the prisons at this period, but those who are curious in these details we would refer to the opening chapters of Fielding's "Amelia," wherein the generous and not "trading" Westminster justice exposes the extortions to which the unfortunate prisoners were subjected; or to Miss Williams's pathetic story in Smollett's "Roderick Random," in which is revealed that scandalous practice, the setting of *unconvicted* prisoners to hard labour, under the penalty of most degrading punishments. She was only arrested on suspicion of a felony, yet, before trial, she says, she was "often whipped into a swoon, and lashed out of it;" and her attempt, goaded by torture and despair, to commit suicide, "was punished with thirty stripes, the pain of which bereft her of her senses."

Other abominable abuses, connived at by the adminis-

trators of the law, reigned without the prison walls, and whilst within the gaol the innocent were often punished with merciless rigour, beyond them the notoriously guilty, the outlawed debtor, the highwayman with a price upon his head, roamed at large and unmolested in the sanctuary of the Old Mint. The sanctuaries of the Savoy and Whitefriars were broken up, but as late as the middle of the reign of the first George the precincts of the Old Mint in Southwark were uninvaded by peace-officers, untrodden by the feet of bailiffs. With a few of its immunities still left to it (although deprived of its principal ones by a statute of William the Third), its lawless inhabitants contrived to preserve it sacred from the visits of the law. A regular organisation gave security to the proclaimed debtor, robber, and murderer; the arm of justice could not—*dared* not reach him in the Old Mint. No bailiffs or peace-officers were allowed to enter within its precincts; a “Master of the Mint,” with his body-guard and officers, was appointed for the internal discipline and government of the sanctuary; and, to guard against invasion of its privileges from without—even if such, in madness, should be attempted—scouts and sentinels were posted at all the outlets; and thus crime held it against law and justice, until the statute of George the First swept away its few remaining exemptions and protections, and left it, what it long after remained, simply “a bad neighbourhood.”

The system pursued at the roundhouses, watchhouses, compters, and cages, was equally atrocious to that of the superior gaols: even murder has been committed and hushed up within their walls: but whilst a system of wanton barbarity, which had grown up in an absence of proper regulations and control, prevailed in all places for

the reception of prisoners, tried or untried, a false system of treatment, engendered by erroneous notions and ignorance of the cause or cure of the worst malady that flesh is heir to, produced the same brutalising effects in our madhouses. All prospect of recovery was entirely extinguished by the course of treatment pursued, and the tottering reason for ever driven in terror from its throne by the stern treatment with which it was assailed. Chains and whips, hard words and harder blows, were the portion of the unhappy lunatics, even in the public asylums: they were to be restrained by manacles and handcuffs, by scourgings and violence—but not an effort was made to soothe, to comfort, to calm them. Some were half-starved, others left to filth and vermin; emaciated nakedness, matted filth, and murderous coercion, were to be met with in every cell of Old Bethlehem. Lunacy was dealt with as a crime, and its victims punished accordingly—the raving madman confined with the harmless idiot; males and females in the same wards; and the first beam of recovery and ray of returning sanity shut out by the darkened atmosphere around, and startled back by the screams of agony, the groans of neglected suffering, and the clanking of chains and fetters. And in all their nakedness, and filth, and violence, the poor wretches were made into exhibitions to satisfy the rapacity of their keepers:

“To gratify the curiosity of a country friend, I accompanied him a few weeks ago to Bedlam. It was in the Easter week, when, to my great surprise, I found a hundred people at least, who, having paid their twopence apiece, were suffered, unattended, to run up and down the wards, making sport and diversion of the miserable inhabitants.”—*The World*, June 7, 1753.



Why, it was a cheaper and more attractive sight for "the people" than the lions at Exeter 'Change!

So much for the cruelties of legal discipline to repress outrage and "protect the public;" and to show the extent to which it was thought necessary to enforce respect to the laws, we may mention that, in one year alone, 1732, during the mayoralty of Sir Francis Child, five hundred and two persons were indicted at the Old Bailey, in London only, of whom seventy received sentence of death, two hundred and eight were transported, eight fined, imprisoned, or pilloried, four burnt in the hand, and four whipped, the remainder being acquitted. And this in a population by nearly a century and a quarter's increase smaller than it is now!

From these dismal pictures we may turn to witness an amusing freak of the law, when it took cognizance of scolding women, and punished them with the cucking-stool.

"Scolding women," says Chamberlayne, "are to be set in a trebuchet, commonly called a cucking-stool, from the French '*coquin*,' and the German '*Stuhl*,' placed over some deep water, into which they are thrice let down, to cool their choler and heat." In 1705 one Mrs. Foxby was convicted of being a scold at the Maidstone sessions; and as late as 1776, according to Mr. Weeld's letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1803, the cucking-stool, or tumbrel, as it was sometimes called, was the preliminary punishment of women committed to the Liverpool house of correction. Gay alludes to this punishment in his "Shepherd's Week:"

I'll speed me to the pond, where the high stool,  
On the long plank, hangs o'er the muddy pool;  
That stool the dread of every scolding quean.

West's Poems, published in 1780, also give a description of its application:

Down in the deep the stool descends,  
But here at first we miss our ends ;  
She mounts again, and rages more  
Than ever vixen did before ;  
So, throwing water on the fire  
Will make it burn up but the higher.  
If so, my friends, pray let her take  
A second turn into the lake,  
And, rather than your patient lose,  
Thrice and again repeat the dose ;  
No brawling wives—no furious wenches—  
No fire so hot but water quenches.

One of the most recent mentions of this punishment is made by *Notes and Queries*, as occurring in the municipal accounts of Leicester (1768-9):

“ Paid Mr. Elliot for a cuck-stool, by order of Hall, 2*l*.”

The most recent instance of its *infliction* is mentioned by Brand, as having taken place at Kingston-upon-Thames in 1745.

As we have already had occasion to remark, other offences which now-a-days would scarcely be noticed, or only visited with a nominal fine, were severely resented by the ever jealous law. Thus, in 1796, one Kydd Wake, for hissing the king on the 29th of October, 1795, and crying “No War!” &c., was sentenced to be imprisoned for five years, with hard labour, in Gloucester Penitentiary, to stand in the pillory once within the first three months, and to find sureties for his good behaviour for ten years; and in 1797, a clerk in the Post-office, named Wharton, was fined thirty pounds and imprisoned a week in the Compter for knocking at the door of one Sarah Slapp, between the hours of twelve and one in

the morning of the 6th of January, and throwing stones at the windows.

In 1780 a man was tried before Lord Mansfield, on an information charging him with celebrating mass according to the forms of the Roman Catholic Church, which, had he been a priest (as it was supposed he was), would have subjected him to perpetual imprisonment, but, the fact not being satisfactorily proved, the man was acquitted.\*

The old forms of punishment under the ecclesiastical law continued in use to a later date than those of the criminal laws, which were occasionally revised and altered to suit the progress and refining feelings of the times. In the eighteenth century, the sight was not unfrequent of some conscience-stricken sinner going through the following punishment:—"Public Penance.—The delinquent is to stand in the church-porch upon some Sunday, bare head and bare foot, in a white sheet and a white rod in his hand, there bewailing himself, and begging every one that passes by to pray for him; then to enter the church, falling down and kissing the ground; then, in the middle of the church is he or she eminently placed, in the sight of all the people, and over against the minister, who declares the foulness of his crime odious to God and scandalous to the congregation," &c.

Christian burial rites, also, were refused by the Church of England to "persons dying excommunicate, to such as are hanged for felony, or that wilfully kill themselves, and to apostates and heretics;" and, moreover, excommunicates were "disabled to be plaintiffs in a suit of law," &c.

The severest punishment in the internal discipline of the Church, with which clergymen were visited, was

\* Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices.



"*Deprivatio ab officio*," "*Depositio*," or "*Degradatio*," by which he was entirely deprived of his orders, with the following ceremony:—"The bishop, in a solemn manner, pulls off from the criminal his vestments and other ensigns of his order, and this in the presence of the civil magistrate, to whom he is then delivered, to be punished as a layman for the like offence."

The law was also very jealous of its dignity, and would not put up with being treated disrespectfully. "For striking in the King's Court, whereby blood is drawn, the punishment is that the criminal shall have his right hand stricken off in a sad and solemn manner;" but, "for striking in Westminster Hall, whilst the courts of justice are sitting, is imprisonment during life, and forfeiture of all one's estate." Rather a severe penalty for a hasty blow!

The House of Commons, too, was particularly fond of showing its respect for the constitutional liberty of the press, by pursuing with fire, if not with sword, any obnoxious publication. Thus John Wilkes's celebrated *North Briton*, No. 45, was burned by the common hangman, as were also Wolston's Tracts, Doctor Sacheverel's Sermon (in front of the Royal Exchange), &c.; and an entry in the Journals of the House, dated February the 25th, 1702-3, states that folios 11, 18, and 26 of De Foe's "*Shortest Way with the Dissenters*" having been read to the House, it "Resolved that the book, being full of false and scandalous reflections on this parliament, and tending to promote sedition, be burnt by the hands of the common hangman in New Palace-yard." But the pitiful vengeance of this enlightened parliament was not satiated by seeing De Foe's plans go off in smoke—the writer was fined, pilloried, and imprisoned, and reckoned his pecu-

niary loss from this persecution to have amounted to three thousand five hundred pounds sterling.

As the imprisonment of the lord mayor and one of the aldermen by order of the House of Commons is so familiar a matter of history, we need only remind our readers, in illustration of the extraordinary "measures of repression" taken in those days, that the lord mayor and Alderman Oliver were committed to the Tower on March the 27th, 1771, for liberating two printers arrested within the city by a messenger of the House of Commons and the deputy sergeant-at-arms, on a charge of printing the debates in parliament—an extreme measure, taken in total disregard of the privileges of the city of London. The state prisoners (who received great ovations on their progress to and from the Tower, and who were visited during their confinement by many distinguished sympathisers) were liberated on the prorogation of the parliament, on July the 23rd, in the same year.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## COFFEE-HOUSES AND THEIR CLUBS.

COFFEE and chocolate-houses were the favoured resorts of wits, politicians, gamblers, quidnuncs, and men about town in general; not, perhaps, so much for the purpose of sipping coffee or chocolate as for a lounge, for reading the papers, hearing the news, talking politics, and playing at cards. The daily papers, it would seem, were to be perused for a fee of a penny, for the "Guardian" (No. 160, September the 14th, 1713)\* says of a testy old coffee-house politician, "He here lost his voice a second time in the extremity of his rage, and the whole company, who were all of them Tories, bursting out into a sudden laugh, he *threw down his penny* in great wrath, and retired with a most formidable frown."

We have already alluded to a few of the leading coffee-houses, and we may now glance at the characteristics of their respective visitors. Thus, in 1724, "White's Chocolate-house" was celebrated for its piquet and basset clubs; "Littleman's Coffee-house" for its sharpers and high playing at *faro*; "Tom's" and "Will's" Coffee-houses

\* The *Daily Courant*, the first daily paper, appeared in 1702.



were also frequented by gamesters ; the "Cocoa-Tree" and "Ozinda's" by Tory politicians ; the "Saint James's" by Whigs ; the "British Coffee-house" by the Scotchmen in London ; "Youngman's" by officers ; "Oldman's" by stockjobbers of an inferior grade ; "Garraway's" by the better class of citizens and traders ; "Robin's" by foreign bankers and ambassadors ; "Jonathan's" by stockjobbers ; and "Button's," "Child's," and "John's" by authors. At a later period, the "Grecian" was the resort of politicians, and "Dolly's Chop-house" of wits. The "Chapter Coffee-house," in St. Paul's-churchyard, was frequented by authors and critics, who formed themselves into knots and coteries, each occupying a box, and criticising public men, manners, and works. In 1795, Alexander Stephens says, one box to which he belonged was occupied by Dr. Buchan, the author of the "Domestic Medicine," Sir Richard Phillips, founder of the *Monthly Magazine*, Alexander Chalmers, Doctor Busby, Macfarlane, Doctor Fordyce, Gower, Berdmore, Towers, and other minor celebrities.

"White's Chocolate-house," "Will's Coffee-house," the "Grecian," and the "Saint James's" have been immortalised by the "Tatler." From the first were dated "All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment;" from "Will's" issued the poetical department; the "Grecian" furnished "the papers on learning;" and the foreign and domestic news was gathered at the "Saint James's." The "parlour of the Grecian" is also alluded to by Addison as being at that time the forum of political discussionists ; and "Button's Coffee-house" is made immortal as the gathering-place of the Spectators' Club, and by the recollections of its lion's-mouth letter-box, always open for communications from correspondents. Here Addison,

Steele, Pope, Tickell, Ambrose Philips, Carey, Davenport, and Colonel Brett spent their leisure hours—Button, the proprietor of the coffee-house, having been a servant to the Countess of Warwick, Addison's wife. Garraway's has been enshrined by Swift in the lines descriptive of the class of persons by whom it was frequented:

Meantime secure on Garraway cliffs,  
A savage race by shipwrecks fed,  
Lie waiting for the foundered skiffs,  
And strip the bodies of the dead.

These were the stockbrokers and jobbers of 'Change-alley, and full of them, no doubt, was Garraway's during the memorable South Sea speculation.

The visitors to these coffee-houses at length began to form themselves into clubs—literary, political, convivial, or eccentric. Dean Swift, always up to his ears in political controversy, founded a club in 1712, called the "Society of Brothers," consisting of the men of rank and talent among the Tories, meeting first at the Thatched House, which, on account of its high charges, was abandoned for the Star and Garter, and finally settling at Ozinda's Coffee-house; but, on this club splitting on the rocks of party, he organised one of a more literary character, dubbed the "Scriblerus Club," of which Harley Earl of Oxford, St. John Viscount Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot, Pope, Gay, and himself were members, one of the objects of which was to produce a satire upon the abuse of human learning; but this club was destroyed by the dissensions between Oxford and Bolingbroke. About the same period, or rather in 1710-11, there sprang up the "October Club," thus described by Swift: "A set of above a hundred Parliament men, who drink October beer at

home, and meet every evening at a tavern" (the Bell, in King-street, Westminster) "near the Parliament, to consult affairs, and drive them on to extremes against the Whigs, to call the old ministry to account, and get off five or six heads."

We are indebted to "A Humorous Account of all the Remarkable Clubs in London and Westminster" for the following list of Clubs in existence in 1745: "The Virtuoso's Club; the Knights of the Golden Fleece; the Surly Club; the Ugly Club; the Split-farthing Club; the Mock-heroes Club; the Beaux Club; the Quack Club; the Weekly Dancing Club; the Bird Fancier's Club; the Chatterwit Club; the Small Coal-man's Music Club." To these we may add the Kit Cat Club (on staunch Hanoverian principles, which met at the house of Kit Cat, a cook in Shire-lane) and the Beef-steak Club. The latter club was founded by Sheridan the elder, in 1753, and presided over by the celebrated and eccentric Peg Woffington, the actress, and frequented by members of Parliament and courtiers.

There were also the Pandemonium Club, held in Clarges-street, May Fair; the Blenheim Club, held at the Blenheim Tavern, Bond-street; the Mitre Club, at the Mitre, in Essex-street, Strand. The Mitre Club was founded by Doctor Johnson, the landlord of the house at which it met having been servant to his friend Thrale. A club at the Saint James's, which was composed of Edmund Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Cumberland the dramatist, the Dean of Derry, William and Richard Burke, and Doctor Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, is to be remembered as having provoked and produced Goldsmith's "Retaliation." The



coterie, which amounted to little more than a periodical dinner-party, had, in Goldsmith's absence, written some facetious, good-natured epitaphs upon him, as "the late Doctor Goldsmith," which called forth the brilliant poem of the "Retaliation," which he read at the next meeting of the club. Goldsmith was also a member of the Literary Society. This club was founded by Doctor Johnson (a prolific clubbist, who defines the word *club* in his dictionary so partially), on the model of a similar one founded by him previously in Ivy-lane. The number of members was limited to nine: and the original members were Reynolds, Johnson, Burke, Doctor Nugent, Bennett, Langton, Topham Beauclerk, Chamier (secretary at the War Office), Sir John Hawkins, and Goldsmith, who met and supped together every Monday night at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Soho; but the bounds of the club were extended some years later, and Garrick, Lord Charlemont, Sir William Jones the Orientalist, and Boswell admitted. Goldsmith had, in 1760, been a member of the Robin Hood Club, a debating society which met near Temple Bar, and of which Burke was also a member. He likewise belonged to some clubs of a less intellectual character, as the Shilling Whist Club, at the Devil Tavern, near Temple Bar; a Free-and-Easy Wednesday Club, at the Globe Tavern, in Fleet-street, of which Hugh Kelly the dramatist, Tom King the actor, and Glover, some time an actor, now a wag, were members, besides a huge bacchanalian named Gordon, and a wealthy pig-butcher; and during a summer's sojourn at Canonbury Tower, to a club held at the Crown Tavern, in the Lower-road, Islington. His convivial tastes brought him sometimes into strange company—from noblemen and men

of genius down to pork-butchers and tavern-waiters, or, as they were then called, by the way, "drawers."

The rage for clubs was so strong that men were not satisfied with belonging to one alone, but must be enrolled in several. Thus we find the same names repeated in the lists of members of the Pandemonium, Blenheim, Mitre, Kit Cat, and Beef-steak Clubs, and in the Literary Society and the club held at the Grecian Coffee-house. The passion for clubs even spread to the northern metropolis, where the literary spirit was of a less constrained character than in London, and formed itself into social domestic groups. Yet Edinburgh had its celebrated Poker Club, comprising David Hume, Adam Ferguson, John Home, the author of "Douglas," Lord Elibank, and other eminent men, which took its name from its avowed purpose of stirring up the feelings of the nation against the exclusion of Scotland from the operation of the Militia Act, and at which lighter convivial amusements seem occasionally to have been indulged in.

Mr. Daniel, in his "Merrie England in the Olden Time," has collected a further list of clubs existing in London in 1790. He enumerates the following:—The Odd Fellows' Club; the Humbugs (held at the Blue Posts, in Covent Garden); the Samsonic Society; the Society of Bucks; the Purl Drinkers; the Society of Pilgrims (held at the Woolpack, in the Kingsland-road); the Thespian Club; the Great Bottle Club; the Je ne sçai quoi Club (held at the Star and Garter, in Pall-mall, and of which the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of York, Clarence, Orleans, Norfolk, Bedford, &c., were members); the Sons of the Thames Society; the Blue-Stocking Club; the No Pay No Liquor Club (held at the Queen and Ar-

tichoke, in the Hampstead-road, and of which the ceremony, on a new member's introduction, was, after his paying a fee on entrance of one shilling, that he should wear a hat throughout the first evening made in the shape of a quart pot, and drink to the health of his brother members in a gilt goblet of ale); the Social Villagers (held at the Bedford Arms, in Camden-town), &c., &c.

Most of these, it will be seen, were bacchanalian or eccentric clubs; the freaks and wild orgies of a semi-political society of this class are thus reported in the *London Magazine* of February, 1735:

“On the 30th of last month, in the evening, a disorder of a particular nature happened in Suffolk-street. Several young gentlemen of distinction having met at a house there, called themselves the Calf's-head Club, and, about seven o'clock, a bonfire being lit up before the door, just when it was in its height they brought a calf's head to the window, dressed in a napkin cap, as some say, or, as others, showed a bloody napkin at the window, or one that, being stained with claret, appeared so, and, after some huzzas, threw it into the fire. The mob, having been entertained with strong beer for some time, huzza'd with them; but, taking a disgust at some healths which were proposed, and bethinking themselves of the day, grew so outrageous that they broke all the windows, forced themselves into the house, and would probably have pulled it down, and destroyed the imprudent aggressors, had not the guard been sent for to prevent further mischief.”

In addition to these clubs, there were political debating societies at almost every tavern; and the good-natured raillery aimed at the club system in the pages of the



"Tatler," "Spectator," and "Guardian," show to what an extent it was carried in their day.

They were social gatherings, too, these clubs—harmless when political discussion and gambling were excluded, and useful and instructive where the conversation was of an intellectual character, as it must have been in those clubs where Addison, Steele, and Pope, or Johnson, Goldsmith, and Burke, were members.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## SPECIMENS OF THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF SOCIETY.

WE cannot do better, before closing our Museum of the Eighteenth Century, than show our visitors—or readers—two or three specimens of men of different grades, and each representing a separate sphere of society—mummies embalmed in papyrus by those celebrated preservers of men and character, Addison, George Colman, Bonnell Thornton, and Grose.

The first we shall unrol was embalmed by Addison, and seems to have been an estimable though pleasantly eccentric gentleman, of the name of Roger de Coverley, knighted (most probably on account of his high respectability of character) by—— But we have not a Baronetage at hand. No matter, we speak of the man, not the title, in the character of the COUNTRY GENTLEMAN OF THE TIME OF QUEEN ANNE.

The most eminent among the Club of Spectators was “a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance, which is called after him. All that know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his

behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy, and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho-square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow in the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman—had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him a youngster. But, being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half, and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he got careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humour, he tells us has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied; all the young women profess to love him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house on a visit, he calls the servants by their names and talks all the way up-stairs. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months



ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the Game Act. . . .

“As the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and, as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years and grown old with their master. You would take his valet-de-chambre for his brother; his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard for his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

“I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat; some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time, the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages everybody to him, so that, when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person he diverts himself with; on the contrary, if he coughs or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

“My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived in his house in

the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life, and obliging conversation ; he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem. So that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent. . . .

“As I was walking with him (Sir Roger) last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned ; and, without staying for my answer, told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table, for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood something of backgammon. ‘My friend,’ says Sir Roger, ‘found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it ; I have given him the parsonage of the parish, and, because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years, and, although he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a lawsuit in the parish since he has been among them ; if any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision ; if they do not acquiesce in his judgments, which I think never happened but once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed

in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity.’”

But the character of this real “good old English gentleman, all of the olden time,” cannot be properly displayed without following the description through a length of detail too great for our space; nor would it, perhaps, be fair to do so; for, although we must be wiser and better men for conversing with the dear amiable old baronet (for is it not a living and *speaking* picture?), we must not presume that all the baronets in the reign of Queen Anne were like him. It is the type of a *species*, though, we are afraid, not of the *genus*.

*Squire Western*  
We might exhibit another portrait—of a good, honest, blustering country gentleman, full of oaths, fox-hunting, good wine, and gout—an early riser and late roysterer, as portrayed by Fielding, but it is too diffuse, and the several characteristics not so easily collected, so we must pass on to a more compact portrait—that of the SMALL SQUIRE OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE THE SECOND, which we take from Grose’s “Olio” (1792):

“Another character, now worn out and gone, was the country squire; I mean the little independent gentleman of three hundred pounds per annum, who commonly appeared in a plain drab or plush coat, large silver buttons, a jockey cap, and rarely without boots. His travels never exceeded the distance of the county town, and that only at assize or session time, or to attend an election. Once a week he commonly dined at the next market-town with the attorneys and justices. This man went to church regularly, read the weekly journal, settled the parochial



disputes between the parish officers at the vestry, and afterwards adjourned to the neighbouring alehouse, where he usually got drunk for the good of his country. He never played at cards but at Christmas, when a family pack was produced from the mantelpiece. He was commonly followed by a couple of greyhounds and a pointer, and announced his arrival at a neighbour's house by smacking his whip or giving the view-halloo. His drink was generally ale, except on Christmas, the Fifth of November, or some other gala days, when he would make a bowl of strong brandy-punch, garnished with a toast and nutmeg. A journey to London was, by one of these men, reckoned as great an undertaking as is at present a voyage to the East Indies, and undertaken with scarce less precaution and preparation.

“The mansion of one of these squires was of plaster, striped with timber, not unaptly called callimaneo work, or of red brick, large casemated bow-windows, a porch with seats in it, and over it a study, the eaves of the house well inhabited by swallows, and the court set round with hollyhocks. Near the gate, a horseblock for the convenience of mounting.

“The hall was furnished with flitches of bacon, and the mantelpieces with guns and fishing-rods of different dimensions, accompanied by the broadsword, partisan, and dagger born by his ancestors in the civil wars. The vacant spaces were occupied by stag-horns. Against the wall was posted King Charles's Golden Rules; Vincent Wing's Almanack, and a Portrait of the Duke of Marlborough; in his window lay Baker's Chronicle, Fox's Book of Martyrs, Glanvil on Apparitions, Quincey's Dispensatory, the Complete Justice, and a Book of Farriery.

+ "In the corner, by the fireside, stood a large wooden two-armed chair, with a cushion; and within the chimney-corner were a couple of seats. Here, at Christmas, he entertained his tenants, assembled round a glowing fire, made of the roots of trees and other great logs, and told and heard the traditionary tales of the village. In the mean time, the jorum of ale was in continual circulation.

"The best parlour, which was never opened but on particular occasions, was furnished with Turk-worked chairs, and hung round with portraits of his ancestors; the men in the character of shepherds, with their crooks, dressed in full suits, and huge, full-bottomed perukes; others in complete armour, or buff coats, playing on the bass viol or lute. The females likewise, as shepherdesses, with the lamb and crook, all habited in high heads and flowing robes."

+ There is such a "warmth of colouring" about this picture, something so genuine old English in its features, that we are compelled to feel, with the writer, something like regret at missing this figure from our present rustic scenes. What has become of the small squire?

"Alas! these men and these houses are no more; the luxury of the times has obliged them to quit the country and become the humble dependents on great men, to solicit a place or commission to live in London, to rack their tenants and draw their rents before due. The venerable mansion, in the mean time, is suffered to tumble down, or is partly upheld as a farm-house, till, after a few years, the estate is conveyed to the steward of a neighbouring lord, or else to some nabob, contractor, or limb of the law."

True—too true! May we not carry "refinement" too

far, if such men may not live within its sunshine? Let us pause, and think of the picture of the old squire in the chimney-corner, smoking his pipe and drinking his ale with his tenants at merry Christmas-time. Well, we suppose everything is for the best!

The next in our little gallery is the portrait of the LONDON CITIZEN OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE THE SECOND, painted in "The Connoisseur" of George Colman and Bonnell Thornton (1754):

"In those dusty retreats where the want of London smoke is supplied by the smoke of Virginia tobacco, our chief citizens are accustomed to pass the end and the beginning of every week. Their boxes (as they are modestly called) are generally in a row, to resemble as much as possible the streets in London. Those edifices which stand single and at a distance from the road have always a summer-house at the end of a small garden, which, being erected upon a wall adjoining to the highway, commands a view of every carriage, and gives the owner an opportunity of displaying his best wig to every one that passes by. A little artificial fountain, spouting water sometimes to the amazing height of four feet, and in which frogs supply the want of fishes, is one of the most exquisite ornaments in these gardens. There are, besides (if the spot of ground allows sufficient space for them), very curious statues of Harlequin, Scaramouch, Pierrot, and Columbine, which serve to remind their wives and daughters of what they have seen at the play-house.

"I went last Sunday, in compliance with a most pressing invitation from a friend, to spend the whole day with him at one of these little seats, which he had fitted up for



his retirement once a week from business. It is pleasantly situated about three miles from London, on the side of a public road, from which it is separated by a dry ditch, over which is a little bridge, consisting of two narrow planks, leading to the house. The hedge on the other side of the road cuts off all prospect whatsoever, except from the garrets, from whence, indeed, you have a beautiful vista of two men hanging in chains on Kennington-common, with a distant view of St. Paul's cupola, enveloped in a cloud of smoke. I set out on my visit betimes in the morning, accompanied by my friend's book-keeper, who was my guide, and carried over with him the *London Evening Post*, his mistress's hoop, and a dozen of pipes, which they were afraid to trust in the chair. When I came to the end of my walk, I found my friend sitting at the door in a black velvet cap, smoking his morning pipe. He welcomed me into the country; and, after having made me observe the turnpike on my left, and the 'Golden Wheatsheaf' on my right, he conducted me into his house, where I was received by his lady, who made a thousand apologies for being caught in such a dishabille.

"The hall (for so I was taught to call it) had its white wall almost hid by a curious collection of prints and paintings. On one side was a large map of London, a plan and elevation of the Mansion House, with several lesser views of the public buildings and halls; on the other was the Death of the Stag, by the happy pencil of Mr. Henry Overton, finely coloured; close by the parlour-door there hung a pair of stag's horns, over which there laid across a red roccelo, and an amber-headed cane. When I had declared all this to be mighty pretty, I was shown into

the parlour, and was presently asked who that was over the chimney-piece. I pronounced it to be a very striking likeness of my friend, who was drawn bolt upright, in a full-bottomed periwig, a laced cravat, with the fringed ends appearing through a button-hole, a black livery-gown, a snuff-coloured velvet coat with gold buttons, a red velvet waistcoat trimmed with gold, one hand stuck in the bosom of his shirt, and the other holding out a letter, with the superscription, 'To Mr. —, Common-councilman of Farringdon Ward Without.' My eyes were then directed to another figure in a scarlet gown, who, I was informed, was my friend's wife's great-great-uncle, and had been sheriff and knighted in the reign of King James the First. Madam herself fills up a panel on the opposite side, in the habit of a shepherdess, smelling to a nosegay, and stroking a ram with gilt horns.

"I was then invited by my friend to see what he was pleased to call his garden, which was nothing more than a yard about thirty feet in length, and contained about a dozen little pots, ranged on each side, with lilies and cox-combs, supported by some old laths painted green, with bowls of tobacco-pipes on their tops. At the end of this garden he made me take notice of a little square building, surrounded with filleroy, which he told me an alderman of great taste had turned into a temple, by erecting some battlements and spires of painted wood on the front of it.

"After dinner, when my friend had finished his pipe, he proposed taking a walk, that we might enjoy a little of the country; so I was obliged to trudge along the foot-path by the road-side, while my friend went puffing and blowing, with his hat in his hand and his wig half off his

head. At last I told him it was time for me to return home, when he insisted on going with me as far as the half-way house, to drink a decanter of stingo before we parted. We here fell into company with a brother liveryman of the same ward, and I left them both together in a high dispute about Canning,\* but not before my friend had made me promise to repeat my visit to his country-house the next Sunday."

It is curious to observe how fully the writer's apprehensions lest the citizens' passion for country-houses on a larger scale should extend have been realised in the present age. But this is none of *our* business; pass we to a miniature from Grose's "Olio:"

"When I was a young man," he writes, in 1792, "there existed in the families of most unmarried men or widowers of the rank of gentlemen, residents in the country, a certain antiquated female, either maiden or widow, commonly an aunt or cousin. Her dress I have now before me; it consisted of a stiff-starched cap and hood, a little hoop, a rich silk damask gown with large flowers. She leant on an ivory-headed crutch-cane, and was followed by a fat phthisicky dog of the pug kind, who commonly reposed on a cushion, and enjoyed the privilege of snarling at the servants, occasionally biting their heels with impunity.

"By the side of this good old lady jingled a bunch of keys, securing in different closets and corner-cupboards all sorts of cordial waters, cherry and raspberry brandy, washes for the complexion, Daffy's elixir, a rich seed-cake, a number of pots of currant jelly and raspberry jam, with

\* Elizabeth Canning—a noted impostor of the time.



a range of gallipots and phials, containing salves, electuaries, juleps, and purges, for the use of the poor neighbours. The daily business of this good lady was to scold the maids, collect eggs, feed the turkeys, and assist at all lyings-in that happened within the parish. Alas ! this being is no more seen, and the race is, like that of her pug dog and the black rat, totally extinct."

## CHAPTER XXV.

ODDS AND ENDS.

No one who has read the romances of the last century can have failed to notice the affectation and quaintness of style occasionally observable in the language of their characters. In illustration of this quaintness of language we have throughout given one extract in the present form in which we found them, saving a few emendations which would scarcely have been tolerable. It is also worthy of attention that while our grandfathers were peculiarly economical of their space in omitting some of the letters in their printed orthography, as in the words "could," "would," "wish'd," "kill'd," or as "tho'," "tho' end," &c., they lavished more letters upon other words than we now consider necessary, as in "gollish'd," "city," "honour," and other words. The older forms of preterite tenses were also adhered to in some instances, as "mought have," for might have, "fo' fought," for fought, "has sworn," &c.; but the most singular inflexion was their persisting in transposing the letters of the word, and by spelling it "goel," which was no typographical error, as might at first seem probable, but the regular practice, and apparently the accepted manner of printing the word.

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An affectation frequently observable in the sermons of the period was the substitution of a mute *h* for the aspirate, as "an house," "an high wall," "an horrid charge," &c. For terrace, we also find "terras;" "risque" for risk, and other primitive forms of orthography were still in vogue.

Of abbreviations, Swift protests against several being introduced into polite conversation, and instances some used in his time, among which are "mob," for mobile, "pozz" for positive, "hypps" for hypochondriacs, "bam" for bamboozle, and "rep" for reputation. From the last came the oath or asseveration "'Pon rep," and the term "Demi-reps," applied to ladies of doubtful reputation.

In matters of computation (which they would have printed, with the same inveterate love of superfluous letters, "accompts," for accounts), they were as extravagant of their figures, adopting what at first sight would look like a decimal arrangement. Thus, a clerk writing 4s. 0d. would have expressed it thus, "04s. 00d."

To descend to details, which may appear trivial and unimportant, but are yet curious, we may just glance at the form of their type, so stiff and formal, and, in the department of the numerals, not very convenient or sightly, inasmuch as several of the figures were allowed to range higher or lower than the others, as "1793" for 1793, "1705" for 1705, &c. The & retained certainly a more intelligible character, as it was written and printed "ε," in which may be distinctly traced the "et" of which it is composed, although partaking more of the Greek than Roman form.

In familiar conversation, we may see, by the romances of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, &c., that a favourite



sarcastic exclamation of the time was "Marry come up!" But the other popular and vulgar expressions would not bear transcribing—neither are they worthy of preservation.

If we are to judge of the manners of the age by the productions of its most esteemed writers, the regard paid to delicacy was not of a very exaggerated character. The novelists, satirists, poets, playwrights, and artists of the period were tolerated in assuming the greatest licence of language, breadth of humour, and latitude of expression, that were not always scrupulously refined: coarseness, vulgarity, and even ribaldry and obscenity abound in most of the works of Swift, Sterne, Fielding, and Smollett. Pope's writings are not free from them—in fact, scarcely a writer of the century exhibited much delicacy in this respect, while many of the scenes of Hogarth have their humour heightened at the expense of decency. Sir Walter Scott has said, "We should do great injustice to the present day by comparing our manners with those of the reign of George I. The writings even of the most esteemed poets of that period contain passages which, in modern times, would be accounted to deserve the pillory. Nor was the tone of conversation more pure than that of composition: for the taint of Charles the Second's reign continued to infect society until the present reign, when, if not more moral, we have at least become more decent than our fathers." It is also worthy of remark, as illustrating the variations produced by time in national tastes, prejudices, and characteristics, that, while in the present day the French romances are considered immoral, according to our stricter notions of propriety, so different was the case a hundred years ago, that Desfontaines, the translator

of "Gulliver's Travels" into French, felt it necessary to apologise very seriously for the coarseness of the work, and to soften, and sometimes entirely omit many of the objectionable passages.

Of other "miscellaneous" curiosities of manners and customs, here is one of a royal practice now in abeyance:

"Her majesty, in consequence of being pregnant, has releas'd an hundred and ten parents of children who were confin'd for debt in different prisons, not having discharg'd the demands of the different nurses, all of whom her majesty has satisfied."—*Old British Spy*, June 13, 1778.

A hundred and ten parents imprisoned for not paying their nurses! At all events, *this* is no humorous statement, for we are forced to ask what became of the hundred and ten innocents thus ushered into the world from bankrupt parents? A hundred and ten children whose parents could not pay for their birth, much less for their future maintenance, and least of all, we fear, for their education! A hundred and ten candidates for the workhouse and the gaol! Neither must we enshrine this act of charity on the part of her majesty as a "curiosity"—the *manner* in which the money was given alone was remarkable: the *spirit*, thank Heaven! is common on our soil.

In the next extract we have a glimpse of another regal practice:

"*Hampton Court, August 1st, 1737.*—Yesterday, 31st July, being Sunday, their majesties, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and Princesses Amelia and Caroline went to Chapel at Hampton Court, and heard a sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. Blower. Their majesties and the rest of the royal family dined afterwards in public, as

usual, before a great number of spectators."—*London Gazette*, No. 7623, Tuesday, August 2, 1737.

The legislature appears to have interfered occasionally with the rules of dress and fashion. "Revolutionary" costume was suppressed after the rebellion of the Young Pretender:—"June the 17th, 1747.—The royal consent was this day given to a bill for restraining the use of the Highland dress." "Patriotic" costume was enjoined in the next year, when "any party selling or wearing French cambric, or lawn of French manufacture, in any part of Great Britain, from and after June the 24th (1748), will be subject to a penalty of five pounds; except the person so wearing shall truly disclose the party of whom he purchased such cambric or lawn, when the wearer will be relieved of the penalty, and the seller alone pay it."

Mr. Dickens, in his "Nicholas Nickleby," first drew public attention to the enormities practised in the "Yorkshire schools," but, at the period of which he speaks, the terms for "a liberal education," board and clothing, were twenty guineas per annum. What must have been the horrors, the miseries and privations, the neglect and cruelties suffered in these academies in 1779, when we find advertisements in the public prints announcing "a Classical and Commercial Education, comprising a course of Latin, Greek, Mensuration, Algebra, Dealing, &c., &c., with board and clothing, at Twelve Guineas per annum!" This interpretation of the term "liberal education" may, in some measure, account for the illiterate language which Smollett puts into the mouths of his physicians, lawyers, admirals, colonels, and apothecaries.

To be sure, the cost of living was tolerably cheap about this time, and twelve guineas went a good deal further



than twelve guineas would now. George Colman the younger relates that, on his tour with his father to the North of England in 1775, the hotel charges for dinner, consisting of "no scanty meal, but plenty of everything, fish, flesh, and fowl, and excellent of their kind," were consolidated under the head of "EATING, one shilling." Tea would have been a dearer meal even then, but what a luxury it must have been forty years earlier, when, according to the price-current of *Read's Weekly Journal, or British Gazetteer*, of Saturday, April 27th, 1734, the prices of that article were: "Green Tea, 9s. to 12s. per lb.; Congou, 10s. to 12s.; Pekoe, 14s. to 16s.; Imperial, 9s. to 12s.; Hyson, 20s. to 25s.!"

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We have already said our Cabinet contains but specimens—our task has been but to arrange them. We are no moralists; we have hazarded no conjectures, and shall advance no opinions of our own. We have been but diligent pickers-up of curiosities on the by-ways of history, and have only written a catalogue of them, not a treatise. Without, therefore, inquiring into the probable cause or explaining the effects of the phenomenon, we cannot but call attention to another remarkable feature of the Eighteenth Century—that it produced more hereditary talent than any preceding it, displayed in literature, in the senate, and on the stage, by the Cibbers, the Colmans, the Sheridans, the Walpoles, the Pitts, the Foxes, and the Kembles.

The stirring political events of the Eighteenth Century have been registered in history; its worthies have been recorded in biography; its great works are preserved in

our libraries, our galleries, and our streets; its fame lives in our memories, and its disasters are best forgotten. It has been our task to collect the scattered details of its domestic manners and customs, which may serve to illustrate the other portions of its history. That we may have occasionally opened new ground, and dug up curiosities that had not been seen since they were first buried in the dust of time, we sincerely hope—that they are worth preserving we devoutly believe : to describe and arrange them carefully we have endeavoured, as far as the incongruous and varied nature of the materials would admit.

As illustrative of the Manners and Customs of the Eighteenth Century, if it aspire to no consideration from the historian, our collection may be useful to the novelist, the artist, or the actor: it has, at least, one recommendation—it is genuine. We have given our authorities for every anecdote; we have stated distinctly where we found every specimen; and, where we have been tempted to be trespassers and purloined a piece or two of gold from the previous “diggings” of Mr. Knight or Mr. Daniel, we have referred to the place from whence they took it, and convinced ourselves that they were not mistaken.

After all, we have only picked up the curiosities that lay upon the surface—we have not dug deeply into the heavy soil of history. The events of the century are only alluded to when they tended to illustrate its manners or tastes, and then they have been but lightly touched upon—it was its every-day domestic life we wished to convey an idea of. The materials of which our museum is composed may be sneered at—they are but newspaper paragraphs, after all. But the very news departments of the public journals and magazines are never useless in elucidating history; if the

details and circumstances narrated are but of local, personal, or temporary interest, their nature, or the manner in which they are told, throw a light upon an age that is gradually fading in the distance.

The man who thinks the only information to be derived from our old magazines is to be found in their essays and treatises, will find less than we, who have searched their news departments, their poetical pages, and their fashionable scandal: there is not more material to be found in many books than in their dedications. The very portion which might be passed over as unworthy of perusal—the paragraphs of domestic news, the birthday and new-year odes, the prologues and epilogues of plays, the advertisements, the lists, even, of marriages and deaths, the description of the latest fashion, the dedications of books, the small talk and scandal, are the very portions in which to look for the characteristic curiosities of the time. As historical records they are not, perhaps, so useful or so authentic as in their character of mirrors of manners, customs, tastes, and public feeling. Yet history is made up of other materials besides state documents and records; it would not be so complete as we find it but for the additional lights thrown upon it by coins and medals, and fragments of antiquity, that were not made for handing it down to us.

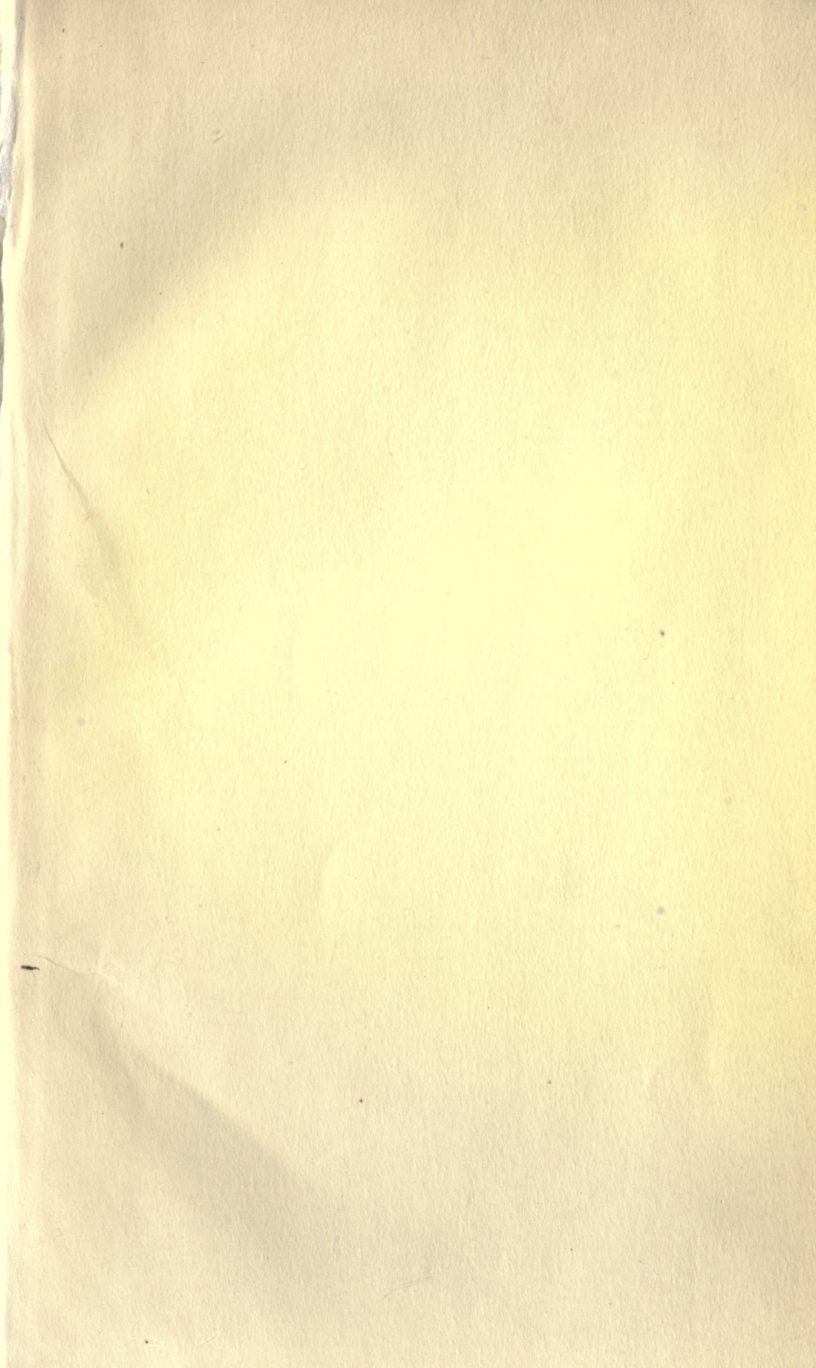
That the information thus derived is valuable we do not pretend; all that we contend for is that it is curious—nay, perhaps more—it may be useful in reconciling and realising recorded history. It may enable us to see the great events of the time in the light which shone upon them—to clothe its characters in the dress they wore—to consider its measures with a tinge of the feelings in the midst



of which they originated ; and, in reading of the events of the Eighteenth Century, we may be better able to sever ourselves from the nineteenth—to step back into the days of our grandfathers, and be at home in their society.

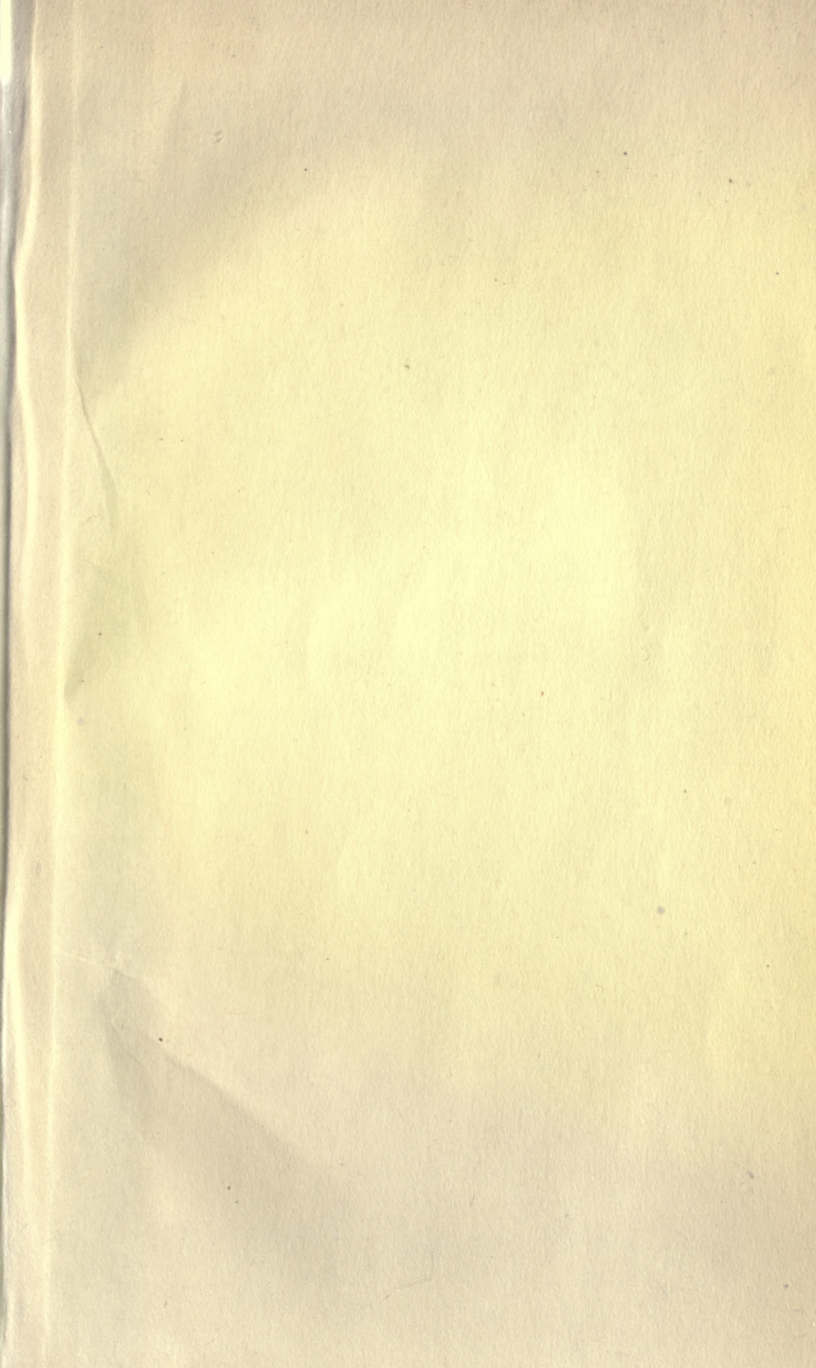
To this purpose are our curiosities dedicated—the gleanings of the fields which abler hands have reaped.

THE END.













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Andrews, Alexander  
The eighteenth century

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